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THE WOMAN OF HONOR.

In THREE VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

Letters bring things more home, and repreſent them more to the life, than either Annals or Lives.

BACON, *Lord* VERULAM.

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MEMOIRS

OF A

WOMAN of HONOR.

VOLUME II.

LETTER XIII.

Mrs. BUCKLEY *to Mr.* MELLEFONT:

Richmond.

I Wrote you, I think, dear nephew, ſome letters ago, that the ſcenes threatened to grow more and more intereſting; and I have

ſuch an one now for your entertainment, as, though it came upon us as unexpected as a clap of thunder in a ſerene ſky, has not a little diverted and edified me. I need no great prologue to prepare you for anticipating Clara to be the heroine of it; which is the very reaſon you would never from her hear the particulars. They do her too much honor for herſelf to ſpecify them to you.

Three nights ago I had received a joint card from Lady Harriet and Clara, acquainting me of their deſign next morning to make a kind of *grand tour* of the ſhops, to buy a number of articles of dreſs and decoration, of which Lady Harriet had prepared a liſt, [a-gainſt the Marqueſs of Soberton's arri-

val,

val, I ſuppoſe, who is now hourly expected, with the next fair wind; ſo that the propoſed match will immediately take effect;] the card concluded with a requeſt to me, to aſſiſt them in quality of their council of taſte; a ſervice for which I was, however, diſqualified, by my having long loſt ſight of the faſhion: Not that I at all diſapprove, eſpecially in young people, of an attention to it, when not carried to a fooliſh exceſs; and am ſo far from deſpiſing dreſs in our ſex, that I think too great a neglect of it, a worſe fault, if poſſible, than running into that of over-dreſs, where beauty periſhes, overlaid with perfidious ornaments, through a miſtake as miſerable as that of the Roman virgin ſmothered under the Gallic ſhields, inſtead of the

trinkets ſhe had bargained for, as the reward of her treaſon.

In compliance, nevertheleſs, with the deſire of two perſons ſo dear to me, I waited on them next morning; and, after finiſhing the round of our purchaſes, we returned home to Lady Harriet's apartment, where, juſt as we were buſily employed in unfolding a piece of ſilk of our Spital-fields manufacture, and admiring its richneſs of taſte, and excellence of the work, Lady Lovell came into the room, abruptly and unawares upon us.

I ſcarcely need, I ſhould think, obſerve to you, that, though frequently on a viſit to Lady Harriet, and Clara,

both

both whom I almoſt equally love and eſteem, I had always, though without any cauſe of umbrage or offence, declined any court to this lady, her humor, temper, and opinions, being ſo different from mine, and indeed from her daughter's. This you will have of yourſelf concluded, from what I have precedently touched to you of her character. She was formally polite to me, I coolly civil to her. This was not, you may be ſure, the way for us to run into mutual intimacy, which I am ſure I was far from deſiring, nor, probably her ladyſhip either.

She had, I gueſs, ſtood a few moments, obſerving us. At length we ſaw her, and paid her the due reſpects;

which ſhe did not in the leaſt return. I could plainly ſee her eyes ſparkling, her cheeks reddened, her lips blue, and quivering with rage, but had not ſo much as the moſt diſtant ſuſpicion of the cauſe: ſhe did not ſuffer us to languiſh long in the ignorance of it. The torrent preſently burſt out, directed to Lady Harriet, in the following tenor, as near as I can recollect it.

"So! Lady Harriet, is this then "the reward for all my tenderneſs, all "my care of you, to be the inſtru-"ment of ſtabbing me to the heart, "in laying baits for your weak ſilly "brother, to deſtroy the hopes of our "family for ever? Was it for this you "have brought that firebrand to our

"houſe,

" houſe, that female friend of yours,
" that parſon's daughter, with her
" whole dowry of charms, talents, and
" ſentiments; is that an alliance to il-
" luſtrate ſo noble a ſtock as ours?
" Here has been Lord Lovell juſt now
" with me, to aſk my conſent for mak-
" ing his addreſſes, to that little crea-
" ture there; but I have ſent him
" away with the anſwer he deſerves,
" nor will ever ſee him again if I know
" he dares but to think of a match,
" than his ſtooping to which, I would
" ſooner by much ſee him laid in his
" grave, as well as I love him, and,
" indeed becauſe I do love him too
" well to ſee him run headlong into
" ſuch mean and deſpicable ruin. —
" As for you, Miſs, (turning to Cla-

" ra,) are all your pretences to virtue
" and morality reducible to nothing
" better than to the ſeducing a ſon
" from his obedience, and making a
" daughter an accomplice of the guilt?
" And you, Madam Matchmaker,
" (here I came in for my ſhare,) what
" was you to have for your part of the
" management? Gratious Heavens!
" how has the honor and quiet of this
" family been bought and ſold among
" ſuch a pack of you? Oh, my poor
" deluded ſon!"

During this ſpeech, nothing could equal the conſternation of poor Lady Harriet, except the compoſure of Clara. For myſelf, I can ſafely ſay, I felt no emotion but that of a ſincere

ſimpathy

ſimpathy for the tenderneſs of a mother anxious for a ſon's welfare: as much miſguided as Lady Lovell was on this occaſion, I reſpected her motive, and pitied her miſtake.

Her daughter ſtood, literally ſpeaking, mute with aſtoniſhment and grief. I was myſelf, in default of her anſwer, preparing to ſay ſomething, when Clara, making a ſign to ſpeak, prevented me. Lifting then up her eyes to Lady Lovell, and fixing them on her with the utmoſt modeſty, but with all the dignity of inſulted innocence, ſhe ſpoke with a tone of voice, ſo mild, ſo ſweet, as made it plain, that the provocation had thrown no acrimony into a ſpirit greatly ſuperior to it.

She told her ladyſhip, that nothing in this treatment, which was even a violation of hoſpitality, hurt her ſo much as the affliction ſhe ſaw it gave to Lady Harriet, than whom none better knew the injuriouſneſs of that ſuſpicion, which Lady Lovell had given for her cauſe of ill uſage: that ſhe herſelf had never in word, action, or thought, encouraged Lord Lovell's deigning to look down ſo low as her; nor, what was more, ever intended it, if that promiſe could give her ladyſhip any ſatisfaction: that ſhe was rather ſurpriſed at his lordſhip's having given Lady Lovell ſuch occaſion of uneaſineſs, as aſking her conſent, before he had obtained her's, (Clara's;) which ſhe

moſt

moſt humbly entreated her ladyſhip to believe ſhe was as far from giving, as her ladyſhip could poſſibly be her's; that to quiet her alarms, ſhe would venture to offer her the moſt ſacred aſſurances ſhe could require, that ſhe would never give any the leaſt diſtant encouragement to her ſon, who ſhe humbly preſumed might very well have ſpared her the pain of receiving, in herſelf, and in the perſon of her equally innocent relation, ſo cruel and ſo undeſerved an inſult.

Turning, then, to Lady Harriet, who ſtood by in the utmoſt confuſion, pale, and ready to faint with grief and ſhame at this treatment of her, ſhe entreated of her not to give herſelf any the leaſt

uneaſineſs on her account; adding, that their ſeparation would ſoon have come on in courſe; that it's being a little prematured was of no great moment, and carried with it the conſolation for the manner in which it was taking place, of nothing, on their ſide, having provoked it; that ſhe took leave of her, and thanked her for all her kindneſs, which ſhe ſhould eternally remember with the utmoſt gratitude of heart, while ſhe would certainly forget, or rather had already forgot, the indignity offered to her, by one ſo juſtly dear to Lady Harriet, and whom ſhe ſhould, on that account, never ceaſe to reſpect.

All

All this was ſaid and done without any fine *tal-tidum* tone, or any theatrical airs, but purely with ſuch an eaſy natural ſimplicity, as ſhowed ſhe was capable of the greateſt ſentiments, without any effort, as being rather born than bred in her. Then taking me by the hand, ſhe was moving towards the door to leave the room immediately with me, when Lady Harriet, incapable of commanding her ſentiments, and unchecked by the preſence of her mother, ſprung round her neck, and bathed her with her tears, till Clara, in the fear of its being diſagreeable to Lady Lovell, diſintangled herſelf from her arms, and with the tendereſt ſimpathy once more took leave of her, Lady

Harriet

Harriet continuing ſpeechleſs, and burſting with a vexation, to which her reſpect for her mother forbid her giving vent. At parting ſhe darted at me the tendereſt and moſt beſeeching look, expreſſive of the moſt earneſt requeſt not to involve her, with Lady Lovell, in my reſentment of this uſage.

As for that Lady herſelf, I, who had all the time with great coolneſs kept the moſt contemptuous ſilence, could eaſily obſerve, that the abruptneſs of Clara's departure, combined with the irreſiſtible force of truth there was in what ſhe had ſaid of her never having given her ſon the leaſt encouragement, ſtruck her with ſome aſtoniſhment, and with ſome regret for having proceeded

with

with ſuch precipitation. I red in her looks a willingneſs to come to an explanation, which Clara eluded, with a noble diſdain, by immediately withdrawing.

We then went down directly into the hall, where nothing of what had paſſed above had, from its ſuddenneſs, yet reached; and you may gueſs the ſurprize of the ſervants, when Clara, calling for her maid, deſired her to come, as ſoon as poſſible, after her, to my houſe at Richmond with her trunks and baggage. Then whiſpering to me where ſhe would go, about half-a-ſtreet off, for a few minutes, till a coach could be got ready, ſhe addreſſed herſelf to the ſervants, who were giving

the

the moſt unfeigned ſigns of ſorrow in their countenances, and telling them, ſhe hoped they would forgive her having been of ſo much trouble to them, and begged them to accept, as a mark of her grateful remembrance, a purſe of ten guineas, which ſhe put into the porter's hands. All this did not take up the ſpace of two minutes.

We ſoon got to Richmond, in the way to which Clara appeared wholly taken up with her regret of the pain ſhe might ſafely believe this untoward incident would give to Lady Harriet, who, however, ſhe obſerved, with a ſmile of ſincere pleaſure, would ſoon have her concern alleviated by the arrival of her long ſighed for Lord Soberton, upon

which

which ſhe would be the firſt to congratulate her. As this reflexion, I ſaw, had brought back all her good humor, I juſt ventured to touch to her on the cauſe of the thunder ſtorm, from which we were actually making our eſcape, the prepoſterous ſtep Lord Lovell had taken, in aſking his mother's conſent, before he had her leave, whoſe diſpoſitions ſhould rather have been firſt conſulted.

Clara, without caring to enter into a ſubject, for which ſhe appeared to have the utmoſt indifference, only laughed, and ſaid ſhe was not verſed enough in the ceremonial law of courtſhip, to know whether he had erred againſt it or not, but that if he had thought it

worth

worth his while previouſly to know her mind, he might very well have ſpared Lady Lovell ſo terrible an alarm.

For my own part, I really do not know what to judge of this procedure of Lord Lovell's. It may or it may not be well meant, but, certainly, conſidering his mother's known humor, he has acted at leaſt very indiſcreetly, in an application where he might ſo reaſonably preſume a denial, and has gained very little advance with Clara, by giving her room to imagine he conſidered her conſent as a thing implicitly in courſe. If his lordſhip, then, on the ſtrength of his title, fortune, and perſon, ſhall have taken for granted, his having nothing more to do, even were

he

he to obtain Lady Lovell's acquieſcence, than to ſignify his pleaſure to Clara, ſo much, I think, I know of her, I might queſtion whether he would find his progreſs much greater than that of Punchinello's match, half made, ſince he had got his own conſent. And, by the by, I ſhould be loth to ſwear his lordſhip had got his own.

Clara's maid did not till the next day come with the things that her miſtreſs had left in town, to whom ſhe brought the following letter from Lady Harriet, with which I conclude this.

Yours, &c.

LUCY BUCKLEY.

LETTER XIV.

From Lady HARRIET *to Miſs* CLARA MAYNWARING.

London.

I Need not, I hope, tell you into how deep a diſtreſs I was thrown by the indignity offered to you yeſterday. I ſhould in vain endeavor to expreſs to you the poignancy of my feelings; but I ſhould not do you juſtice, if I could fear your refuſing it to me. You will diſdain to make me reſponſible for thoſe errors of others, which I am but the greater object of pity,

pity, for my being forced, in ſome meaſure, not to condemn with all the aſperity they deſerve.

Do you, if but on my account, deign to have any curioſity about what paſſed after your leaving us? Without waiting your anſwer, allow me to take for granted that you have, and to ſatisfy it accordingly.

My mother and I ſtaying in the room after you was gone out, ſhe had not quite recovered the ſort of confuſion in which your admirable behaviour had left her, when ſhe turned to me, who ſtood by keeping a ſilence, in which it was plain to ſee no ſmall ſhare of indignation at what had paſſed.

I under-

I underwent, then, a ſevere examination about the matter of her diſpleaſure; in the courſe of which, nothing could be ſo eaſy as my part, ſince I had nothing to do but to tell the plain truth, which was only confirmative of your juſt aſſurance of never having in the leaſt encouraged my brother's addreſſes: I might ſafely have gone farther, and ſaid, that you had conſtantly behaved to him with ſuch an exceſs of coolneſs and indifference, as I had often thought rather leaning to the other exceſs. But, in the humor ſhe was in, I plainly ſaw ſhe might perhaps puſh her injuſtice ſo far as to call this artifice and deſign. I reſpected, then, my poor mother too much to

give

give her occaſion for adding one more egregious miſtake to thoſe under which ſhe was already not making the beſt of figures.

So far I had done juſtice to you, but there now remained for me to do a piece of juſtice on myſelf, in a fair confeſſion to Lady Lovell, that there was nothing I had hardly wiſhed more ardently, than that my brother ſhould be ſo happy as to gain your good graces, being very ſure that he would have the beſt of the bargain. My mother would not ſuffer me to go on, but fell into ſuch a fury as exceeds deſcription. I verily once thought ſhe would have ſtruck me. Aye! now ſhe was ſure you had bewitched me as

well

well as her ſon, but ſhe would, as far as was in her power, deliver us from yours. She forbad me then abſolutely, on pain of her higheſt diſpleaſure, to ſee you and Mrs. Buckley any more, adding, that when I was miſtreſs of my own conduct, alluding, I ſuppoſe, to my marriage with Lord Soberton, I was to do as I pleaſed, but that in the mean-while ſhe would be obeyed; and that as to her ſon, he might lay his account with irrevocable marks of her diſplea-ſure, if he ſhould deſerve them by an alliance of himſelf ſo contrary to her deſigns for him.

Dear Clara, I love my brother well, but ſincerity ſtill better. It is this that makes me obſerve to you, that though

there

there is ſomewhat ſpecious in his propoſal to Lady Lovell, of honorable addreſſes to you, there is, to me, who know him thoroughly, ſomething too crude, too irregular in that ſtep. What could hinder him from previouſly opening himſelf to me, if he had not the heart to begin, as was moſt proper, by declaring himſelf to you? He could not, from my ſentiments of you, ſo well known to him, expect I ſhould be very unfavorable to him. In the mean-while, I paſs with my mother for an accomplice, where I was not ſo much as a confidant; though I ſhould not have had the leaſt ſcruple of being both. You ſee, however, that I do not ſhrink from the charge, or wiſh to diſown the honor of it. No. I

think my diſgrace a triumph, without any impeachment of filial duty; becauſe I am very ſure my mother's reſentment turns upon a falſe fact; and though I am bound to reſpect her errors, nothing obliges me not to ſee them, or not to hope her ſeeing them herſelf.

Pray my beſt and tendereſt reſpects to Mrs. Buckley, on whoſe excellent ſenſe I may ſafely depend, for her ſeeing, in my preſent ſituation, nothing to forgive, and a great deal to pity me. I ſhall not exiſt till I ſee you both. I have but one thing to wiſh, that my choice in love may be as honorable to me as in friendſhip; I may add, as happy, for I do not look on the late undeſerved, and, at bottom, ridiculous,

injury

injury offered to it, as any material interruption. May it have, with regard to me, the ſame effect on you it has on me, that of endearing you the more to me!

Yours, &c.

HARRIET LOVELL.

LETTER XV.

Mrs. BUCKLEY *to Mr.* MELLEFONT.

Dear Nephew, *Richmond.*

I Received yeſterday a viſit from Lord Lovell, which I did not think I could well refuſe. He made, as I expected, a great parade of merit to me, in having done his beſt to repair the affront he had offered me, (and for which he renewed his entreaties of forgiveneſs,) by the commencement of a more honorable procedure, in the overtures he had made of his deſigns to Lady Lovell, whoſe diſpoſitions he owned

he

he knew, but did not deſpair of over-coming.

His reaſon, he ſaid, for not preliminarily addreſſing himſelf to Clara, was, that he thought he needed, eſpecially after what had paſſed between him and me, a foundation of ſufficient proof of the purity of his intentions. He hoped he ſhould find the acceptance of his ſuit, independent of his ſucceſs with his mother, and that he had now cleared his way for a requeſt to me, that I would admit his viſits, on a footing, to which, he preſumed, there could be no objection.

He alſo expreſſed abundance of ſorrow and reſentment for the ſcene, of

which he had been innocently the cauſe, when Clara left the houſe, and concluded, with an earneſt deſire to pay his reſpects perſonally to her.

As I was prepared on all points for this viſit, by a full knowledge of Clara's mind, about him and his pretentions, I told his Lordſhip, in a polite, but preremptory tone, that, without entering into the merit of his ſincerity, I thought myſelf obliged not to deceive him with falſe hopes; that he might make Lady Lovell perfectly eaſy, by deſiſting from a fruitleſs purſuit, for that Clara, independent of any conſent, or refuſal of conſent, from his mother, was determined to receive no addreſſes from him; and that even if he was

not,

not, in quality of brother to Lady Harriet, entitled to the moſt favorable diſtinction, her common gratitude, combined with her deteſtation of all coquetry, would oblige her to ſpare him the trouble in vain of a ſollicitation, againſt liſtening to which ſhe had taken an unalterable reſolution: that ſhe acknowledged he did her more honor than ſhe deſerved, but that he would ſtill do her a greater pleaſure, if he would take this anſwer as final.

You will, dear nephew, eaſily conceive how much a vain man, who had, on all his advantages, and on the merit of the ſtep he had recently taken, preſumed a reception with open arms, muſt be mortified at ſuch a rebuff. He then

wanted to draw me into ſome explanation of the nature and cauſe of this averſion of Clara againſt him; but I ſtuck cloſely to my point, which was ſimply that of a flat diſmiſſion of his ſuit, without giving any reaſon, or leaving him any glimpſe of hope, that ſhe might be brought to alter her mind.

He aſked me again if he might have leave to ſee Clara; but to that requeſt I anſwered, by an appeal to himſelf, whether, after ſuch an anſwer as he had received, ſhe could well admit a viſit from him, unleſs he imagined that this rejection of her's was mere grimace, lure, and artifice, which were not at all in her character.

Lord

Lord Lovell interrupted me here, and ſaid he felt it but too ſeverely; that he was ſo diſconcerted, ſo ſhocked, that he did not know what to ſay; which I really believe, for I could plainly diſcern in his countenance the diſtracting emotions of wounded vanity and diſappointed deſire.

He then took leave, and the next day he ſent a letter to Clara, who returned it unopened.

I am ſenſible, that on this occaſion the world would be forward enough to condemn Clara, for being wanting to her fortune; and the world would be in the right, if felicity depended ſolely

on fortune, which may, indeed, be always a desirable accessory, but can never have the honor of being considered as a principal. Is it, then, Clara's fault, if the world makes wrong estimates in so essential a concern? Or is she to sacrifice the happiness of her life to the falsity of its judgment?

Surely, of all the human duties not the least sacred is that of not marrying one whom one does not love. It is even a crime against the person one marries under that circumstance. A crime so often productive of many others; a crime into which no parents ought to wish to seduce a child. It is, then, purely on this virtuous, this indispensable principle, that Clara has

refused

refuſed Lord Lovell. Nor is he the only one, by many, to whom ſhe has given the like anſwer, a number of ſuitors having already followed her to my houſe. But ſhe is generally denied to every one, except to a few ladies, and to one or two gentlemen, much advanced in years, of whoſe converſation ſhe uſed to be fond at Lady Lovell's, not, moſt certainly, for their being old, but for the improvement of her underſtanding, which ſhe is aſſiduouſly cultivating. One of them you know very well, Dr. Tyſon, who, at paſt eighty, allies all the graces of youthful vivacity with all the dignity of age. His manner of inſtructing young people is admirable: it is not by impoſing on them his judgment of

things that he aims at leading them, but by engaging them to form their own, on a due examination of all opinions propoſed to them, by the lights of their own reaſon properly prepared, without truſting to it too much or too little. Nor is it a little honor to Clara's taſte and good ſenſe, that ſhe is delighted with his converſation and he with her's.

Among her diſcarded ſuitors there was one character which I thought the more curious, for his being a young man: one Mr. Southwold, who is, literally ſpeaking, "dying of nothing but a rage to live." With a great fortune, and all circumſtances agreeable, he cannot enjoy life, for the perpetual appre-

henſion

henſion of its ſhortneſs. He is conſtantly imagining himſelf ſick; while his diſorder is intirely that of his own mind. He fatigues with his complaints all the Phyſicians he meets with: ſome laugh at him, others preſcribe for him, but they all take his fees, and he their phiſic. There is not a quack advertiſement he reads, but he fancies the caſe applicable to himſelf, and ſends for the noſtrum, and by this means he has at length arrived at deſtroying, or at leaſt greatly damaging, an originally good conſtitution. He ſcrupulouſly weighs all his meat and drink, of which he regulates the quantity by the ſanctorian chair, as he does his dreſs by a barometer. I really believe he turned his thoughts on Clara, as much with the

view

view of advantage to his health, from having a nurſe of her exquiſite bloom and freſhneſs as for any thing elſe. Another than Clara, not tempted by his fortune, or not driven by the want of one to ſuch an hoſpital, would have laughed at him; Clara only good naturedly pitied his caſe, and wiſhed to recommend him to Dr. Tyſon.

It is really but juſtice to Clara to obſerve, that ſhe poſſeſſes ſovereignly the talent of declining offers without offence to thoſe who make them. I know of but one to whom ſhe perſonally gave a ſhort abrupt diſmiſſion, his vanity having been ſo offenſive that ſhe could not keep meaſures with it, or diſdained to keep them.

This

This was young Turpin, ſon to the notorious Turpin, who has made one of thoſe ſcandalouſly rapid and immenſe fortunes which ſo juſtly provoke the indignation of a public, that could not have been ſo infamouſly pillaged, if the guarding againſt ſuch depredations had not been even treaſonably neglected by thoſe who had the adminiſtration of the national treaſures, and who, for want of capacity, or of attention to their duty, made or ſuffered ſuch bubbles bargains for their country. If Turpin was not guilty, the government could not be innocent; and, in the mean while, leaving that queſtion to be decided as it may, he proceeds enjoying without taſte, a fortune gotten without honor.

But

But as to the young cub of this beaſt of prey, you in your life never ſaw ſo ignoble, ſo trivial a figure, with a dull heavy countenance, anſwerable to his underſtanding, as if nature had diſdained a deception. This was the wretch, who, ſmitten with Clara's beauty, made his addreſſes to her with an inſolence ridiculous enough for its abſurdity, but not very ſurprizing conſidering the condition from which this ſon of a dunghill ſprung, among the dregs of the people. His ſtile of courtſhip was that of a man doing Clara great honor and not a little charity, by taking her with ſuch a "monſtrous" diſproportion of fortune, (as if beauty, virtue, and talents were objects of calculation by pounds,

pounds, ſhillings, and pence,) eſpecially too as he had actually half a dozen Dukes daughters thrown at his head, over whom he was moſt graciouſly giving her the preference. Clara, rather ſhocked than angry at his pretentions, which ſhe looked on as ſo degrading to her, was not content with a ſimple rejection of him, but threw into it, to puniſh his inſolence, much ſuch an air as one would uſe to a footman offering his ſervice with worſe than no character, with a bad one.

This, however, is really a ſingle inſtance, for it is impoſſible for any one to have a greater averſion than Clara for giving pain or uneaſineſs. That

cruelty

cruelty of which thoſe whom ſhe refuſes complain, lies, even by their own confeſſion, in the refuſal itſelf, and not in the manner, which is always the gentleſt, though the firmeſt, and the moſt peremptory imaginable. But they miſtake the term; her refuſals are not cruelty in her, but delicacy, and even in that delicacy ſhe is herſelf purely paſſive, and conſequently not to blame. Is it her fault if thoſe who have hitherto courted her, could not excite in her a liking ſufficient to determine her choice, and prevail over her attachment to her liberty? Is ſhe anſwerable for their want of power to pleaſe? Or would it not ſtill be a greater fault in her to encourage the addreſſes of thoſe ſhe feels ſhe can never love, and to keep

keep them in ſuſpence with the lure of falſe hopes? The truth is, ſhe is only difficult; but I believe her heart is far from impenetrable to the paſſion of love; ſenſible of which herſelf, ſhe dreads the conſequences of a choice that is to embark her for life, on a ſea, in which there are a thouſand ſhip-wrecks for one good voyage. She may poſſibly, it will be ſaid, with her niceneſs, out-ſtay her market. Be it ſo: that is at her riſk and peril, and at the worſt a difficulty of chuſing can hardly be worſe puniſhed than what a bad choice commonly is.

In the mean while, from her preſent eaſe and tranquillity, you would not

conclude

conclude her greatly alarmed with the fears of any very bad consequences to her future happiness from her present indifference.

Yours, &c.

LUCY BUCKLEY.

LET

LETTER XVI.

CLARA MAYNWARING *to Mrs.* MELLEFONT.

Richmond.

"TO what viciſſitudes, to what "unaccountable turns are hu-"man affairs expoſed!" Do not think, dear ſiſter, this is a ſcrap of morality, ſtolen from one of Mr. Mellefont's ſermons, without too juſt a cauſe of application.

The Marqueſs of Soberton, after leaving his father at Spaw, with ſome hopes of recovery from his illneſs, finds, at his return to England, a mother, whom

whom he had left in perfect health, at the point of death, from the ſudden ſtroke of an apoplexy. She expires inſenſible in his arms. His grief was, I am told, immoderate. Poor Lady Harriet, too! How deeply do I feel for her! Independently of her concern for the Marqueſs's loſs, and of the retardment, in reſpect to decency, of an union which ſhe paſſionately wiſhes with the object of her pureſt love, ſhe loſes in the Ducheſs a valuable friend. It was her intereſt with her ſon, perhaps, too, even her aſcendant over him, that engaged him to ratify the choice, which, without conſulting him, ſhe had made of Lady Harriet; a choice, to which ſhe was more led by my friend's merit, than even by the family-convenience, which,

how-

however, collaterally found its account in the match. I ſhould, indeed, imagine it impoſſible for one of Lord Soberton's character for taſte, not to be ſtruck with ſuch tranſcendent worth as that of my friend's, in whom every thing, beauty, youth, fortune, and, above all, an irreſiſtible amiableneſs of character, concur to ſecure a proſpect of happineſs.

It is now, indeed, that I cordially lament the bar which Lady Lovell's chimerical fears have thrown in my way, to my flying to Lady Harriet's, and to my endeavours at alleviating her affliction, by ſincerely ſharing it. But, after what has paſt, for me to go to her mother's houſe, is, by all the laws of procedure,

procedure, ſtrictly forbidden me: And indeed I have, ever ſince my knowledge of Lady Lovell's injunction to her daughter not to ſee me, had the juſt delicacy to avoid putting her duty into conflict with her inclination, and have never met her but once, the day before Lord Soberton's arrival, at an auction of pictures, where my aunt caſually carried me, and where we exchanged complaints of the perverſeneſs of our fortune, and mutual aſſurances of the conſtancy of our friendſhip. She did not then mention her brother to me, in which ſhe obliged me; and in her letters to me obſerves the ſame ſilence; on my part, I have not once made him an object of inquiry: Nor ſhould I now mention him, but to expreſs withal my pleaſure

to

to find that neither the incident of her brother's fancy, nor the conſequences upon it, had produced any diminution of Lady Harriet's regard for me, or any alteration of our ſentiments of mutual eſteem.

I have ſent her a letter of condolence on the death of the Ducheſs, to which her anſwer breathes a melancholy that greatly afflicts me. There is in it I know not what air of diffidence and alarm, that I can attribute to nothing elſe but to too modeſt an opinion of herſelf, and an exquiſite ſenſibility. Perhaps, too, the Marqueſs is ſo thoroughly taken up with his grief, and is himſelf, on his recent loſs, too much agitated by the ſentiments of nature, to

pay attention enough to thoſe of love. That paſſion is, I fear, of all the paſſions, not the leaſt unreaſonable in its expectations. A little time muſt ſoon now clear up every thing.

In the mean while, dear ſiſter, I long impatiently to ſee you, and wiſh I could prevail on our aunt here to come down to you with me; but of that, for many reaſons, I deſpair. But ſurely there breathes not a worthier woman. What obligations have I not to Mr. Mellefont, for his recommendation? He knows her, and that is enough; that diſpenſes from all panegiric.

Mrs. Proffer was here but yeſterday, and has given me a packet for you, of a very

a very good collection of Marcello's compoſition. He is undoubtedly the Orpheus of church-muſic. She has in-cloſed with it Mr. Harris's *Hermes* for Mr. Mellefont. I cannot ſay but I greatly eſteem that woman; ſhe never appears in her element but when ſhe is doing a ſervice, and yet always does it with ſuch an air, as if ſhe was grumbling over it. I am convinced, by what I ſee of her, that good humor breeds fat; if ſo, I cannot think ſhe has a bad bargain of her's, for every body loves her.

You muſt give me leave to throw in my mite, for I ſhall cram into her packet the *Stabat mater* of Pergoleſe, and the *Miſerere* of Des-landes, which, though inferior by much to the other, is not

however without its merit. The whole goes by the next coach, with a whole cargo of play-things for the children, of which you will be ſo good as to make an equitable diſtribution.

Yours, &c.

CLARA MAYNWARING.

LET-

LETTER XVII.

Mrs. BUCKLEY *to Mr.* MELLEFONT.

Dear Nephew, *Richmond.*

I Can hardly conceive that you can be without ſome curioſity about Lord Lovell, which, however, I ſhould be unable to gratify, but for Mrs. Villaret, who, as I have before, I think, mentioned to you, had ſome acquaintance with the family, which was rather interrupted than dropped.

Upon the final rejection he received from me, in Clara's name, he returned

to town, and appeared extremely mortified and diſconcerted, and went near neither Lady Lovell nor Lady Harriet; nor would ſcarce ſee any one but his old companion Golding, who was juſt returned to town, and with whom he has, at length, quarrelled, on a cauſe that really does his Lordſhip honor. Golding, it ſeems, to ingratiate himſelf with him, was ſtrongly urging him to ſome act of violence, for getting Clara into his poſſeſſion, which Lord Lovell totally diſapproved. In the heat of the diſcuſſion, Golding, very probably without weighing his expreſſions, or in the ignorance of their force, happened to drop ſomething that ſquinted towards a reproach to his Lordſhip, for not having a heart for ſuch a mettled enterprize.

Lord

Lord Lovell, in whom his own licentiouſneſs had, at leaſt, its bounds, being naturally of not the moſt enduring temper, and beſides, already on the fret upon that ſubject, took fire, as if Golding had accuſed him of poltroonery; and over-heating himſelf with that notion, which, however, was not a juſt one, (for certainly the other had no ſuch meaning,) came to violent words with him, and even to blows, of which he was afterwards heartily aſhamed, as it might give the world room to ſay, he knew whom he was beating. Lord Lovell, by the bye, never wanted for courage, of which he has given unqueſtionable proofs. As for Golding, he had no character to loſe by this incident; a Negro needs not fear being

blacker than he is. For ſome little time he made the moſt abject ſubmiſſions to be taken into favor again, by his Lordſhip, who, however, held out; and who, beſides declaring himſelf ſorry for having ever countenanced ſuch a fellow, made no ſecret of the cauſe of the quarrel. Such is generally the end of that ſociety among unequals, which is only founded on a community of vices and follies.

Golding, grown deſperate by all this, has, by way of extenuating his own guilt, charged, in his turn, his Lordſhip with having no need to be ſo ſqueamiſh, for that his honorable love to Clara was all a pretence; and that he had even made the overture of it to

Lady Lovell, with the worſt deſigns. I really do not know how he ſatisfied thoſe to whom he told this ſtory, but ſatisfied it ſeems they were of the truth of it.

Lady Lovell, who paſſionately loves this ſon, and who was ſo mortally averſe againſt his marrying Clara, is, with all her weakneſſes, a woman of ſtrict morals; upon hearing this account, of the truth of which ſhe was, it ſeems, convinced, ſhe had the candor to declare, that ſhe could ſooner forgive Lord Lovell's meanneſs in his courtſhip of a woman of inferior birth, than ſo abandoned a procedure, as that of preſſing her name into the ſervice of diſhonor, and of deſigning her for

his tool of ſeduction; ſo that he was in thorough diſgrace with her. All this, combined with Clara's diſdain of him, even on the footing of honorable love, had ſo overwhelmed him with ſhame, ſo cruſhed his vanity, ſo ſickened his gallantry, that he was not likely ſoon to be in a humor, or in a capacity, to project, with a very good grace, new conqueſts.

His revenge on Golding being out of the queſtion, by that fellow's being notoriouſly beneath all farther animadverſion, he ſeems to have turned all his revenge againſt himſelf, as if one folly could not be repaired but by another. He is now all for the joys of the bottle. You may gueſs what a

ſet

ſet of company he is got into, with whom he can murder his time in midnight uproar and ghaſtly revels; a company only fit to invert the miracle at the feaſt of Canaan, and turn the briſkeſt Burgundy or Tokay into ditch-water; to make pleaſure ſtupid and gaiety deteſtable. There is great liveliness, to be ſure, in being carried to bed, after a ſitting of ſome hours, without hearing a ſillable of wit, and great humor and taſte in the frolicks of rakes, dull ſober, and worſe drunk. In ſuch a courſe, however, is Lord Lovell now ſeeking to drown reflexion, and muſt ſoon deſtroy his health and intellects, if he is not prevailed upon to ſtop himſelf in time in that infamouſly pernicious career.

Already Lady Lovell begins to relent, and to be in great pain for him, and, did not her pride ſecretly oppoſe it, would perhaps own a wiſh that he had been in earneſt in his addreſſes to a woman of honor, though ungraced with a coronet in her family, that ſhould have ſaved him from the confuſion, "worſe "confounded," into which he is at preſent plunging himſelf. There is, however, one point of which it was with the utmoſt difficulty ſhe was brought to the belief, that not only Clara had given her ſon a flat refuſal, but that her Ladyſhip might very ſafely rely on her not retracting it; an aſſurance that gives her the leſs pleaſure, for its being beyond her conception, and for its rather hurting her vanity of opinion, as to

her

her ſon's irreſiſtible merit. To know him deſpiſed by Clara was to her almoſt as bad, as would have been the knowing him married to her.

As for Lady Harriet, her ſiſterly affection makes her ſuffer greatly for him; ſhe has labored very ſincerely to bring about his reconciliation with Lady Lovell, and it is to be hoped, that by the exertion of her good ſenſe and influence, ſhe will bring her brother to a cooler ſenſe of things, and to a greater reſpect for himſelf.

Clara, in this point, very cordially ſimpathiſes with her, and would, I believe, ſacrifice to Lady Harriet's ſatiſfaction, any thing but her heart, which

is

is independent of her. This I can ſafely atteſt in her favor, that I never heard a ſillable come from her in the ſtile of triumph on this occaſion, but many a ſigh of a compaſſion that had nothing of inſult in it.

But enough, and too much of this at beſt diſagreeable theme, of which I fancy we have got pretty well rid: in my next I ſhall have another matter of communication to you.

Yours,

LUCY BUCKLEY.

LETTER XVIII.

Mrs. BUCKLEY *to Mr.* MELLEFONT.

Richmond.

I Threatened you, in the close of my last, with a new subject: I now keep my word, and proceed with pleasure in the character of writer of an epistolary history, of which Clara is the heroine.

She had been by Lady Proffer introduced to Mrs. Pierpoint, a Lady of great worth, who has a noble house on Richmond-green, and is passionately fond of music, to indulge her taste for which,

she

ſhe has ſet apart a very commodious ſaloon for a muſical aſſembly, by whom, under the direction of a great maſter, there are concerts executed three times a week. The performers are chiefly ſuch Ladies as have puſhed their talent in muſic beyond the degree of thoſe common *dilettantes*, who, with their ſmall proficiency, and premature pretenſions, are fitter to torment than to pleaſe the ear. The two Miſs Willoughby's, the one with her harpſichord, the other with her lute, might play with diſtinction among the firſt profeſſors of the art; Clara, as you well know, has an admirable voice, with great judgment, and an inimitable grace; the reſt of the band are not quite ſo excellent, but there are none of them that are not much above

medio-

mediocrity, ſo that upon the whole they contribute to furniſh a very agreeable entertainment, which is never continued a moment beyond that in which it ceaſes to be ſo. Mrs. Pierpoint does the honors of it with great elegance of taſte, and without any affectation, taking effectual care that none but real good company, in the juſteſt ſenſe of that word, ſhould be admitted, as ſhe would no more open her doors to a worthleſs Duke, than to an indigent ſharper. Every thing is conducted there with the greateſt eaſe, joined with the moſt perfect decency. Without preſuming to dictate to the taſte of her company, her contempt of cards does not hinder her from indulging them to thoſe who chuſe them, and whom the not reducing to

the neceſſity of ſheer converſation, renders more indifferent to them than they poſſibly might be if they were not at hand. But all that can be called gaming is effectually diſcountenanced. The refreſhments provided are regulated by an attention to health, and to the ſeaſon, and are of no very great expence to Mrs. Pierpoint, who gives the entertainment, being chiefly coffee, tea, chocolate, biſcuits, and the like.

It is very ſeldom, however, that Clara goes there, and never without Lady Proffer, whom ſhe is always deſirous of obliging, and with myſelf. Not that ſhe does not greatly love muſic, or can have any objection to her exerciſing herſelf in it, in an aſſembly of which ſhe is the

admiration and delight; but I don't know how it is, there is in her a natural diſinclination to go into company, and an invincible timidity, which ſeems leſs to proceed from her not being uſed to it (which certainly is not the caſe, for ſhe has ſeen a great deal,) than from an exquiſite delicacy of ſenſibility which makes her ſhrink from the approaches of any but of thoſe with whom ſhe is well or long acquainted. She appears ſo much born for domeſtic life, that ſhe is out of her element in a public place, or in mixed company. To thoſe with whom ſhe is familiar ſhe lets herſelf looſe with all the boundleſs freedom of innocent gaiety; but, among ſtrangers, ſhe carries ſomewhat of an air of reſerve, but a reſerve ſo far from gloomy, ſo

far from repulſive, that it rather ſerves as a zeſt to that engaging ſweetneſs of her's which is in perfect harmony with it.

Lady Proffer and I then had got her one morning to Mrs. Pierpoint's, when there was no aſſembly, but only two or three ladies of her acquaintance, round the harpſichord in the muſic-ſaloon.

Mrs. Pierpoint having received, the evening before, an Italian ſong ſet to muſic, which has a great vogue, and which I incloſe you with this, deſired Clara to favour her with the execution of it, by way of rehearſal againſt the next aſſembly. Clara complied without

the

the leaſt heſitation, and ſitting down to the harpſichord, was ſinging it at ſight, with her uſual eaſe and ſuperiority of ſkill, when on a ſudden there entered into the room, without being announced, a young Gentleman in deep mourning, who was, it ſeems, expected by Mrs. Pierpoint.

The attention of the company being abſorbed by Clara's performance, he had the time to place himſelf ſoftly behind her chair, unobſerved by her, and for ſome moments by us the bye-ſtanders, whoſe eyes when he ſaw fixed on him, he made a ſign of intreaty not to diſturb the ſinger.

In

In the mean while I, who had really never ſeen him before, readily conjectured, from the air of familiarity and eaſe with which he treated Mrs. Pierpoint, that he was ſome perſon not only of character, for her door was open to none elſe, but particularly eſteemed by her; as then his eyes and ears were wholly taken up with Clara, it was eaſy for me to examine his perſon.

With a very noble deportment and a ſtately preſence, there was in his countenance an air of languor that was even pleaſing, as it appeared leſs the impreſſion of a grief, than of a temper ſo habitually turned to tenderneſs and humanity, that his face

had

had moulded itſelf upon his heart. He was tall and genteel, in ſhort, a very agreeable figure.

No ſooner had Clara finiſhed her ſong, and received the applauſe which it was hardly poſſible to deny her, and in which the ſtranger emphatically joined, than Mrs. Pierpoint, taking him by the hand, preſented him to thoſe of the company who did not know him, under his title of the Marqueſs of Soberton.

At this name Clara could not help ſtarting with the emotion of an agreeable ſurpriſe, when the Marqueſs, without giving her the time to ſay any thing, bowing very low to her, entreated

treated her pardon, both for Mrs. Pier-point and himſelf, having laid this ſcene for a firſt interview, for which Lady Harriet's encomiums, both in her letters and verbally, had given him the moſt impatient curioſity; adding, that he heartily forgave Lady Harriet for her not having done her juſtice in her deſcription, ſince he ſaw that was impoſſible.

Clara letting this compliment fall to the ground, with much more modeſty than the taking it up and dwelling upon it would have been, acquitted herſelf of the due expreſſion of civility on this occaſion with a chearfulneſs, a frankneſs of air, which I had never before obſerved in her to a ſtranger,

uſed

uſed as ſhe was to be remarkably ſhy to any, eſpecially at the firſt ſight. Her eyes ſeemed to gliſten with the ſmiles of liking and approbation.

As for the Marqueſs, as I had all the coolneſs of a by-ſtander, I could eaſily diſcern the impreſſion that his view of Clara, as ſhe ſtood up to pay her reſpects, made on him. He looked profoundly ſtruck, which, however, might be nothing more than the common effect of Clara's appearance: ſoon, however, encouraged by her engaging manner of receiving him, which had even ſomething careſſing in it, he recovered himſelf into rather more eaſe, and they preſently ſlid into a converſation, of which Lady Harriet being

the ſubject, Clara was the leſs reſerved, and the more drawn on to ſpeak with readineſs and familiarity. Perhaps I refine too much, perhaps my partiality for Clara may ſeduce me, but I thought that of the two it was not the Marqueſs that was the leaſt embarraſſed. Soon the converſation growing general, and the time approaching for ſeparating, the Marqueſs, addreſſing himſelf to me, ſaid, he hoped he ſhould have both our leaves to pay his reſpectful viſits to Clara, which, if admitted, he ſhould the oftener avail himſelf of the permiſſion, as he was come to ſtay for ſome little time at Peterſham, with his aunt Lady Clifford.

As

As there could be no reaſon, on the terms he ſtood with Lady Harriet, for declining ſuch a civility, Clara joined with me in aſſuring him, that we ſhould conſider it as an honor, and receive it as a favor.

No ſooner was Clara returned home, than ſhe ſat down to write Lady Harriet a minute account of what had paſſed, which ſhe concluded with a ſincere congratulation on her proſpect of happineſs, in a choice that did her taſte ſo much honor.

Lady Harriet's anſwer expreſſed great ſatisfaction at Clara's having ſeen this ſovereign elect of her heart, and eſ-

cially at her approbation of him, which, if it could not, ſhe ſaid, increaſe her love, at leaſt confirmed her judgment, and gave to her paſſion the authority of reaſon. Still there was in her letter a turn to the gently plaintive ſtrain, for the Marqueſs's not having given her opportunity enough to employ herſelf perſonally in the alleviation of his grief, by ſincerely ſharing it, and for his flying for conſolation to any thing but love. She concluded with theſe words:

"You might wonder, my dear Clara, "that, ſenſible as I am of the power "of your charms, I am not in the "leaſt touched with a jealouſy, which, "from my never having felt it, I may

"venture to aver, is not inſeparable
"from love; I ſay, you might wonder
"at this, if you did not know me
"and yourſelf. Incapable of ſo vain
"a thought as that of preſuming on
"my Lord's conſtancy from my own
"perſonal merit, I pleaſe myſelf with
"the unlimited confidence I have in
"his character. I would diſdain to
"owe his fidelity to the poor circum-
"ſtance of his not ſeeing a woman
"more worthy of being beloved than
" myſelf. On the contrary, I wiſh
" him ſuch trials. If he comes off
"victorious, the honor will be the
"greater to him, and the ſecurity to
"me. If he does not, I may and
"ſhall undergo the moſt mortal afflic-
"tion, but ſhould diſdain a poſſeſſion

"on ſo precarious a tenure, as that
"of a ſuper-eminence, to which I am
"clear I have no pretentions, or of
"that of a heart capable of ſacrificing
"to a motive of change ſo eaſily pre-
"ſumable, and which often depends
"on the levity of fancy, the happineſs
"of a woman, that ſhould entirely
"found it on the faith of his ſuperi-
"ority to it."

Nothing more juſt, nothing more generous, than Lady Harriet's ſentiments on this point; but the greatneſs of my regard for her makes me fear, that ſhe has not enough diſtinguiſhed between the cruel and too common acquieſcence in a family-arrangement of intereſt and convenience, and the

clear-ſpirited paſſion of love, ſuch as ſhe finds it in her own heart, and preſumes it becauſe ſhe wiſhes it in Lord Soberton's, and becauſe it would perhaps have hurt her too much to entertain a doubt, that might have led her to an examination. Her ſincerity of paſſion will have blinded her to the coolneſs of his return. Not that I think Lord Soberton capable of inſincerity to her; it is with himſelf that he will have been inſincere, in his taking thoſe ſentiments of eſteem for Lady Harriet, which it is not poſſible to know her and to refuſe to her, for love, or for ſomething very likely to become love.

I have ſeen and peruſed his letters to her, from the Spaw, where he was

with the Duke his father, and where-ever he introduces the word Love, I thought I could, more agreeably to the ſenſe of the context, have ſubſtituted Eſteem. I have marked his procedure ſince his return; it has always appeared to me in the higheſt form of good-breeding, but without any thing of that eagerneſs and warmth that characteriſe a paſſion, and leſs in the ſtile of ſentiment than of ceremony. Perhaps I over-refine, perhaps I may be miſtaken, at leaſt, I ſincerely wiſh I may be ſo.

Mrs. Pierpoint, who is intimate with his aunt, and has known him from his infancy, gave me the other day, his hiſtory, merely in the courſe of converſation,

verſation, without my having led her into it by the way of inquiry, and purely from her own pleaſure in ſpeaking of him.

His education had proceeded in the common rote through ſchool and college, without preſenting any thing extraordinary except his ſingular application to his ſtudies, which produced a proficiency in them very uncommon for thoſe of his rank, who are too often ruinouſly indulged and even encouraged in a remiſſneſs, which, if ever years bring with them judgment, they are ſure to repent, when the loſs of the moſt favourable time for learning of any kind, is, generally ſpeaking, irreparable. What expectation can there

be of an harveſt where there has been no cultivation? The ſpring of youth is naturally the ſeaſon of improvement, and man knows no ſecond ſpring.

Upon finiſhing his ſtudies, inſtead of being hurried away prematurely on that ſilly wild-gooſe chace after accompliſhment, called the *grand-tour*, in the manner it is commonly performed, he underwent at leaſt a year's preparation, not only by reading the very few good books of voyages, which were ſpecially ſelected for him, but by being inſtructed in the actual poſition of the Courts of Europe in general, and particularly of thoſe he was intended to viſit, and in the characters and views of the reſpective leading

leading men in each. His desire was also excited to see and converse personally with all the eminent in arts and sciences, to whom he was to carry introductory letters of recommendation, such characters being of all the least likely to make any advances to him, or to throw themselves in his way; the lights and instructions, however, to be gathered from whom were incomparably a greater object of curiosity, than domes, porticos, paintings, statues, monuments, cabinets, or the like, that so vulgarly satisfy the silly superficial gape of travelling sight-mongers; not that these need be wholly neglected; the just point is only to consider them in a very subordinate view.

On his travels, then, his taſte thus previouſly formed was not only uſeful to himſelf, but did honor to his country, by his ſupporting the dignity of a Britiſh Nobleman, I mean ſuch as it was before the barely not total extinction of that character. Mr. Greville, who attended him as a kind of travelling council, qualified by more years, and a greater experience to adviſe and direct his conduct, was himſelf a real Gentleman of the politeſt education, the greateſt elevation of ſentiments, and a perfect knowledge of the world. To define him by negatives, which will give at once an idea of the happineſs of the choice procured for his Lordſhip, and of the wretchedneſs of that ſo frequently made for thoſe of his rank,

rank, he was not one of thoſe Hottentots of literature, thoſe uncivilized pedants, with nothing to recommend them but a few undigeſted ſcraps of Latin and Greek, who themſelves need a preceptor of manners, and who have ſo ſtrikingly the air of a bear leading his cub a dance. As little was he one of thoſe pert, ſhallow, frothy led-captains, who, equipped with a ſmattering of murthered French, and with all the ſcum of court-futility, imagine themſelves the fineſt of fine Gentlemen, and conſequentially enough to ſo falſe a conceit, run the perſonage, wiſely entruſted to their charge, through a whole courſe of nonſenſe, of every thing, in ſhort, that taſte would fly from and diſdain, a ſtupid circle of pandars, buona-robas, opera-

ſingers,

fingers, the canaglia virtuosa, mumping *Cicerones*, silly cicisbeos, or foreign noblemen, more ignorant, if possible, than themselves; and when they return, what a boast to have seen the Pope, the Pretender, and all the fine sights, with an emphasis that makes trifles more trifling. But no matter, they will, and the more is the pity, "have seen Europe, and Europe them," as an old Knight said to his son.

Lord Soberton having been happy enough to escape the disadvantage to him of either of these choices, and being pre-instructed in that art, so useful and so little known, of seeing with judicious eyes, proceeded on his travels, which he finished with great

great and juſt ſatisfaction to himſelf and friends, under the care of Mr. Greville, who, attending him in the character of companion, friend, and guardian, acquitted himſelf nobly of his charge.

He returned home, fraught with uſeful points of knowledge, and eſpecially, by compariſon, penetrated with a reverence for the conſtitution of his native country, which he looked on as the ſheet-anchor that would alone enable it to weather the temporary detriment to it, from the wretched government under which he found it, without order, and without authority, and, what is worſe yet, without deſerving to have any; in a condition, in ſhort, that made it no ſmall merit, the not deſpairing of the commonwealth.

So

So ſoon as he was arrived all parties made their application to him, nor, moſt certainly, for any good they expected from him, of which they had not the leaſt conception, but for the ill that each of them apprehended from the weight which his acceſſion would give to their opponents. Without honor enough to eſteem merit in their enemies, they deteſt it in their friends, becauſe they fear it every where. It was not, then, poſſible for him to have leſs merit than the heads of the parties wiſhed him to have for their ſervice, which is ſo exactly true, that you would have ſworn the competition for places was carried on by an emulation of worthleſſneſs. One who is now aſſociated to the rank of a Peer,

has

has had the candor to atteſt this melancholic truth, of worth being even a neceſſary excluſion.

Perhaps, dear nephew, you may think this exagerated. Turn to his pamphlet, of which I ſent you, ſome years ago, a copy, for the curioſity; it is entitled, "*A modeſt Apology for his Conduct.*" You will find, page 15. theſe ever memorable words.

"I cannot help reflecting to what "numerous inconveniences, not to ſay "miſchiefs, a nation is ſubject, where "the very nature and neceſſity of public "affairs, or of *thoſe who direct* them, "make it abſolutely neceſſary to exclude "the

"the greateſt, the wiſeſt, and the beſt "of men."

Yet what is this but in other terms imputing to a government the moſt ſhameful, the moſt execrable of all falſe neceſſities, that of a recourſe to the ſervice of knaves and fools?

In this condition it was that Lord Soberton, at his return, found his country, much as he had left it, or rather growing every day worſe and worſe, its intereſt lying neglected, like a houſe in Chancery between contending parties, and running to ruin ſo as to threaten ſoon to be not worth to any the getting poſſeſſion. He beheld, then, with pity and indignation, ſo

vile

vile a ſiſtem as the current one, titles degraded, ribbons ſtained, poſts diſhonored by the dirty channel in which preferment to them generally ran, reverſions ſcandalouſly anticipated, penſions out of the money of the public, for incapacity of ſervice, or, worſe yet, for notorious diſſervice to it; while many of theſe infamous benefits were not even conferred by favor, or ſpontaneous emanations from authority, but inſolently forced from it, the trophies of victorious faction; in which caſe they had ſhockingly the air of the priſes of a low dirty ſcramble, or of goods ſnatched out of a houſe on fire, by ruffians watching the hour of diſtreſs.

With

With the ſpirit, then, to prefer an inrolment in the book of ſtate-martyrs for ſerving his country, to a place in the Court-Kalendar for betraying it, the Marqueſs ſpurned the applications of all parties; determined as he was to devote his whole power of utility to the real ſervice of the nation; diſdaining the implicitneſs of being inliſted, where a man dares not call his vote his own, even in the moſt ſacred of all caſes, that of the truſt repoſed in him by his country.

With theſe ideas, you may eaſily think he would not be miniſterially recommended to any borough, and though ſure of carrying one by his family-intereſt,

intereſt, he looked on his exertion of that influence as a criminal prevarication againſt thoſe laws, which ſo wiſely prohibit to Peers their intermeddling in elections, and which are ſo dangerouſly, not to ſay treaſonably, tending to ſuffer abolition, by diſuſe, connivance, or neglect. In vain did his father and friends preſs him to conquer that ſcruple, which they even tried to turn to ridicule, by giving it the name of falſe heroics, in times when there was no hope of effectually oppoſing the current, but by appearing to go with it: the Marqueſs to this inflexibly oppoſed for anſwer, That a man who was himſelf breaking the law in one point, could with a very ill grace oppoſe the breach of it in others, and that he would diſdain

diſdain to enter the houſe at a door he was determined, whenever he ſhould have got in, to endeavour at condemning, or ſhutting up for ever in future.

Soon after, a borough deputed to him, with an entreaty to do it the honor of repreſenting it. Lord Soberton, who was not at all the bubble of this invitation, and knew very well what it meant, did not think himſelf at liberty to refuſe, though but a ſeeming opportunity of being in a way to ſerve the nation, but was withall determined to preſerve an inviolable reſpect for his own favorite general maxim, That whoever buys his ſeat will ſell his country. He declared himſelf, then, a candidate, but when it came to the

puſh,

puſh, though perhaps the kingdom cannot boaſt a Nobleman of a more truly generous ſpirit, he would not ſacrifice ſixpence to bribery, direct or indirect, in any of thoſe ſhapes which that Proteus takes to elude the danger of the graſp of Juſtice, little as that danger is, conſidering that her hands, on this occaſion, appear taken up with being held before her eyes. But what was the conſequence? His appearance in that character only ſerved to raiſe the price of the feat to young Turpin, who had ſtood againſt him, who, literally ſpeaking, was beneath the honor of being his footman, but who, in virtue of ten thouſand pounds of that money, of which his father had plundered the public, being thrown away

by

by him, in order to make a moſt villainous figure in Parliament, carried it, in the jocky-jargon of the turf, hollow againſt his Lordſhip. On this failure, the Marqueſs ſaid he was only ſorry, that, with all his execration of corruption, he had been the cauſe of it in others; but that he much wondered at the abſurdity of our laws, who puniſhed with death any wretched debaſer of the lawful coin of the kingdom, while they had provided no adequate puniſhment for an infinitely more atrocious crime, that of debaſing the lawful ſubjects of Great Britain, by corrupting them. "A kingdom (Lord Burleigh obſerved) "could not be rich while the coin was "baſe;" he might have juſtly added, that while the ſubjects were ſo, it could

not

not be ſtrong. When the very fountains of good government, on which the national welfare and ſafety ſo capitally depend, are poiſoned, what deſtructive evils muſt not flow from them? While the facility with which Corruption, by taking a thouſand ſhapes, eludes what little reſtraints there appear to be laid on it for form-ſake, only ſhews it at once the more mean, for its recourſe to diſguiſes, and the more dangerous, for the difficulty of guarding againſt it. Adding, that to murder a Briton was, in the eye of ſound policy, a venial treſpaſs, compared to that of corrupting him out of his duty to the public, ſince it killed the freeborn ſubject, while it left the villainous ſlave alive; for ſurely

a bought voter is, in fact, no freer than a forced one, and certainly more infamous; left him to rot above ground, a nuiſance to his own conſcience, and a peſt to his country. In which plain, unexaggerated light, though a maſſacre of a multitude of Britons might carry in the ſound of it ſomething more dreadful, it could not, in the ſenſe, give a more horrid idea than the peſtilential vapor of corruption's deſtroying the nation itſelf, and making of it a cadaverous maſs, fit only, with its leaven of putrefaction, to engender and nouriſh ſwarms of vermin; for ſurely it is not men that corruption breeds.

To thoſe who, on his thus miſſing two elections, expoſtulated with him, on, perhaps,

perhaps, an overſtrain of rigor in him, in times that required a greater latitude of principle, his Lordſhip was the firſt to laugh at himſelf for acting as if he was very ſeriouſly looking on the Houſe, as the Romans did on the ſanctuary of Honor, to which they allowed no acceſs but through the temple of Virtue; but that, all jeſting apart, he heartily adopted Sir Benjamin Rudyard's opinion, "That there was nothing in the "world worth being a raſcal for," and that, according to his fixt principle, there could not be a more mean, raſcally act, than that of tempting others to break the laws of their country, in a concern eſſential to its very ſalvation: beſides which, he had an unconquerable averſion for his reſembling, in any

point, the knaves of intereſt, or the fools of faſhion.

That as to the firſt, whoſe motive for getting into the houſe, was to make a traffic of themſelves, and of the greateſt concerns of the nation, he had not words to expreſs his horror for thoſe infamous political fortune-hunters, or adventurers, who had not a ſingle idea of repreſenting their country, or any part of it, except that moſt contemptible part of it, their own dear ſelves, which they commonly ſold a moſt bitter bad bargain to the purchaſer, as they cannot poſſibly fetch leſs than they are worth, their whole ſtock of merchantable ware, conſiſting generally in politics without know-

knowledge, ſpeeches without eloquence, and votes without opinion; votes, the rage of ſelling which had infected all claſſes of the ſubjects, being as common at market, and their price-current as well known as that of any other ſtaple-commodity: that Germany traded in its Soldiers, Egypt in its Eunuchs, Circaſſia in its fine Women, Africa in its Negroes, and Great Britain in its Voters, which might not impoſſibly be the cauſe of its ſoon having no other trade.

As to thoſe triflers, whoſe pretty little lives dimple along, running to waſte in their ſhallow current, and who mean abſolutely nothing more by getting into the houſe, than a matter of

courſe, with their fortunes to gratify the ſilliest of all vanities, that of an attainment, in conſequence of which they muſt make a poor, ſubaltern, contemptible figure; one would be tempted to forgive them the purchaſe of their ſeats in parliament, if they could at the ſame time purchaſe abilities to fill thoſe ſeats, or the ſpirit to do their duty in them; inſtead of being the cyphers of parties, the tools of miniſters, or the bubbles of falſe-importance. Humanity would owe them ſome pity, if that pity was not exhauſted on the wretches who can look up to them, or on their country that ſuffers by them.

However,

However, when the Marquefs found he could not get a feat, upon his own principles, he with great eafe and great fcorn, renounced any thought of obtaining one by the practice of the times, fhrugged up his fhoulders, and left things to their courfe, which he was not the maſter of ſtopping. From an eminence on a bank he faw the fhallow dirty current roll away beneath him, carrying away with it the little trifling ſtraw, ſcruff, and bubbles on its furface to the gulf of perdition: This he beheld with ſorrow and with pity, but ſurely with no ſort of temptation to fling himſelf into the loathſome puddle.

Thus far, dear nephew, by way of giving you ſome idea of the Marqueſs's political character; in his private he has nothing of the acrimony of miſanthropy, or of too ſupercilious an intolerancy of fools; an indulgence to whom he looks upon to be ſomething in the nature of clemency to brutes. When buſineſs, when connexions of family, when chance throws them in his way, it never coſts him an effort to diſſemble to them a ſuperiority which might be painful or offenſive to them; for he never thinks of it himſelf, and conſequently throws nothing into his air or manner, that may make them think of it. His never taking the lead of the converſation, gives him the character of the company, and

he

he inſtinctively lets himſelf down in uniſon, which, ſometimes, it is not very eaſy to do, ſo as to be low enough. Thoſe who diſpleaſe him, he rarely condemns in any way, but that of ſhunning them, without letting them ſee that he ſhuns them. He is extremely reſerved in the choice of his company, not from pride, but from taſte. With a natural enmity to any diſtinction, that ariſes out of little objects, nothing ſatisfies him but real greatneſs in any thing. Small thinking he holds very bad, ſmall talk ſtill worſe, ſmall writing ſurely not much better, but ſmall life contemptible to the laſt degree, and among thoſe of his own rank, what could be more common than ſeeing all theſe at once? His dread then of becoming himſelf bad

company, made him keep as much as poſſible out of that which is ſo vulgarly and ſo impudently called good company, and which is only fit to contract the head, and to corrupt the heart. And no wonder, ſince among the greateſt of them you meet with prejudices as pitiful, and paſſions as mean, as among the loweſt of the mob, only with leſs nature, and more power of diſguiſe. Compaſſion is an honor to humanity, but it is a pain too; and the wrong heads, foul hands, and rotten hearts, ſo frequent to be met with in the preſent ſiſtem of ſociety, giving him that kind of diſguſt which one commonly feels at the ſight of blotches and ulcers, makes him the fonder of ſolitude and receſs. Who does not pity loathſome diſeaſes,

diſeaſes, and yet who would chuſe to live in an hoſpital of incurables, or run the danger of their contagion?

Yet, with all his ſpirit of toleration of the follies of the world, he could not remark, without ſome little reſentment, that ſcandalous indiſtinction between the worthy and the worthleſs, from which ſo many think it as cheap to be good for nothing as not, on much the principle that the vileſt mechanics will tell you that it is better to play for nothing than to work for nothing. Ignoble ideots, who never conſider, as indeed they never think, that merit is its own reward, independent of opinion, or of fortune, and conſequently well worth all the pains of attainment, if it led to no-

thing more than to be with juſtice reſpectable in one's own eyes. But, ſurely, when theſe poor devils give you their ſublime delights, taverns, brothels, foppery of dreſs, dangling at a court, or a chocolate-houſe, gaming-tables, routs, horſe-races, and the like, for objects of envy, and proofs of taſte, the abſurdity of a beggar's fluttering his rags as if they were finery, could not be more ridiculous.

His Lordſhip, ſenſible that thoſe who do not enough deſpiſe trifles, will certainly not have a paſſion for great things, very good-naturedly, and very ſincerely pities the futile occupations of thoſe titled inſects that flutter about, with a pert vivacity, which adds fatigue

to

to dullneſs. For my part, when I ſee them in that ſickly unmeaning whirl of frivolous diſſipation, they remind me of the flies, who, on a miſchievous boy's plucking off their heads, move in ſhort, circular ſtaggers, dragging for a while their bodies about, without point or view; and when their little lives are out, are not one jot more immemorable. A fly or a fool the leſs in the world is no great damage.

But there is one vice againſt which, I am told, his Lordſhip has declared immortal war, though now grown ſo univerſal as to have almoſt ſwallowed up all the reſt, the pitiful, low, dirty vice of avarice. A vice, with all its infamous littleneſs, big with the ruin

of

of every nation in which it is not exploded with the ſcorn and contempt it deſerves; if but for its rendering unfaſhionable thoſe principles, the deſtruction of which muſt be fatal to none more than thoſe who are actually hard at work, to promote, and have nearly effectuated it, under the inſtigation of that execrable fiend. Alas! take the calendar of our leading men, peruſe it, analiſe it with candor, and tremble for your country, to conſider how few of them are exceptions to the general deſignation of them for ſlaves to that ignoble paſſion, equally deſpicable whether its iſſue be in taſteleſs expence, or in ſordid parcimony. But what a ſhame! what a reproach to human kind is it, that many of

thoſe wretches ſhould make of their not wanting money a plea, not for declining the degrading wages of corruption, but to raiſe their price on the purchaſer in proportion to their infamy for their not being above the ſale of themſelves. Their noble reaſon amounts to nothing better than that the fatter the beaſt at market the more it fetches. Thence that callous inſenſibility to true honor, or even but to common juſtice, from which they receive the pay for worſe than being only of no ſervice to their country, and rather for eating, literally ſpeaking, the black bread of treaſon; the ſale of a vote, or the co-operating to carry through unnational meaſures being nothing leſs. Or is it poſſible hardly

to

to name a more atrocious breach of truſt; while thoſe ſoft, indolent triflers, who ſtand by and ſee the detriment, without interpoſing to hinder it, are but one degree leſs guilty, and liable, at leaſt, to the charge of a miſpriſion of treaſon? The miſchief they do not oppoſe, they in ſome meaſure commit, and are at leaſt as much anſwerable for the ill they do not hinder, as for the good they do not do. Pitiful characters! if but for being pandars to the avarice of others, who only deſpiſe them for their connivence; poor creatures, incapable of opening their eyes upon their own worthleſſneſs: devoted to inutility, and content with being counted for nothing by the public, but eſpecially by

thoſe who take the advantage of their tameneſs and ductility, to ſeize all the beſt morſels for the feeding their own avarice, without giving them ſo much as the bones to pick. And this they ſuffer! nay, think it life to ſuffer! I adore their ſerenity! but am rather ſhocked at the impudence of their pretentions to dignity; yes, dignity, forſooth! under the circumſtance of ſuch conſummate worthleſſneſs.

It is, however, on the prevalence of this low tyranny of avarice, that Lord Soberton, who, as I have before obſerved, is himſelf the moſt generous of men, will hear of no modification or compoſition for the horrors of that villainous

villainous paſſion. The univerſality of it is ſo far from intimidating him, that it only redoubles the ſternneſs of his indignation, which is barely tempered by the coolneſs of his contempt. He often, it ſeems, ſays, that if he had but half a dozen coadjutors, men of weight and authority, to aſſiſt him, and who ſhould be as much in earneſt as himſelf, it would be no more than a party of pleaſure to them, to go againſt the whole camp of Corruption, and force it in its innermoſt intrenchments: that it would be but a kind of diverſion to rout regiments of lady-birds and bataillons of butter-flies. And why not? Who does not know that nothing enervates, nothing effeminates more than avarice;

avarice; which has no entrance into any but ſouls as mean as the vice that inſlaves them? But if thoſe half a dozen determinate aſſiſtants required by his Lordſhip are not to be found, what then? Why ſo much the worſe for this country: it would in its ruin, have no right even to its own pity, if the ſuppoſition of a poſſibility to collect ſo ſmall a number of men of real worth, on ſo noble an enterpriſe, ſhould be, with juſtice, pronounced an utopian chimera.

Lord Soberton has, I am told, a very liberal allowance from his father, beſides an independent inheritance from a deceaſed rich aunt. This would enable him, as he does

not

not live with his father, to keep a great houſe, with equipage and ſervants in proportion; but he has reduced his way of living, to the terms of the utmoſt ſimplicity. A ſmall neat houſe, two ſervants, and a chariot, which he hardly ever uſes, being, as he ſays, always ready to run away on foot out of it, for its cheating him of his exerciſe, form the principal part of his domeſtic expence, combined with that of his table, which he keeps conſtantly open to a few ſelect friends, whom he takes care not to poiſon any more than himſelf with thoſe infernal made-diſhes, which he never ſees, but, he thanks God, he is not curſed with a palate for them. His plan is to unite the moſt exquiſite

delicacy

delicacy with the utmoſt ſimplicity, qualities ſo far from incompatible, that the firſt cannot exiſt without the laſt, which does not, however, imply it, the inverſe not holding good. Excellence in every thing, in dreſs, in diet, in poetry, in eloquence, depends on ſimplicity, yet ſimplicity alone does not give it, choice is required, and for that there is in nature ſuch infinite variety, that taſte needs be at no loſs for its exerciſe.

But as to the ſavings made by this ſiſtem of life ſo inferior to his income, the purpoſes to which he applies them abundantly defend him againſt any ſuſpicion of a mean regard for money in them; a regard, from which even

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ſome of our young Noblemen are not exempt, and which muſt make them prodigies of infamy, being as unnatural to that ſeaſon of life, as a hard froſt to the middle of ſummer. The truth is, that he has, even to profuſeneſs, indulged himſelf in the noble enjoyments of private acts of generoſity, which would probably never have been known, but for the great delicacy and refinement of manner which he threw into them, and which defeated his deſigns, and even his injunction of ſecrecy, by that irreſiſtible pleaſure it gave the parties who received them, to mention them with burſts of gratitude.

Another great outlet to his fortune is, his being a munificent patron to all literary

literary merit, and, indeed, of all eminence in the arts and ſciences, the floriſhing of which he looks upon to be a great point of national illuſtration and proſperity. His houſe is filled with the beſt works of Britiſh artiſts, eſpecially painters and ſculptors. Not that, with his taſte, and with his candor, he is not ſenſible, that they have not yet reached the degree of perfection to which ſome foreigners have attained: but it is preciſely for that very reaſon that he thinks himſelf the more obliged to contribute all that lies in his power to inſpire them to attain it. Seeing not the leaſt ſhadow of a reaſon to imagine, that the Britiſh genius could not, with due encouragement, take as high a flight in any art as any other

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nation whatever, he is not at all afraid of paſſing for the bubble of any actual mediocrity in his countrymen, while it is to aid them to emerge out of it, and ſoar to perfection, that what it coſts him in the preference of their performances to the however better ones of foreigners, is, in that view, a very unregrettable ſacrifice of at beſt an object of vanity, to the virtue of a national ſpirit.

I ſhould here think it ſuperfluous to dwell on the mention to you of what is ſo much in courſe, in a character like Lord Soberton's; his conſtant and grateful friendſhip to Mr. Greville, of whoſe fortune he had taken liberal care, but who has lately received

ceived a great addition to it, from the death of a near relation; he is actually now in the country giving perſonally orders about building a houſe on his eſtate there. I find he is ſtill his Lordſhip's principal if not only confident.

With ſo much merit, however, you cannot well, dear nephew, be ſurprized at the paſſion, with which the Marqueſs, young and handſome as he is, has inſpired Lady Harriet; the only wonder would be, that it ſhould not be as much on his ſide as on her's; for, ſurely, there is no charm you can name that ſhe has not. Nature, education, fortune, have all conſpired to make her ſuch an object

of love, that reaſon herſelf muſt applaud a paſſion for her. I do not here throw into the account the Dutcheſs's having made ſuch a point with her ſon of this match, as I am aware of the averſion which love has againſt being laid under ſuch engagements. It is, perhaps, the only cauſe why the Marqueſs has not as yet, at leaſt ſo far as it appears to me, done juſtice to Lady Harriet's merit, in an equal return of paſſion. This is, I hope, to come.

In the mean while, I have been the more particular to you in his character, not only for my wiſhing you to be well acquainted with it, but for its ſo nobly contraſting to

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the generality of his clafs of life, and as I had much rather dwell on what does honor to humanity, than on what fo deplorably degrades it, as the common run of our degenerate Nobility.

I am, yours, &c.

LUCY BUCKLEY.

LETTER XIX.

Lady HARRIET LOVELL, *to Miſs* CLARA MAYNWARING.

London.

My ever dear friend,

YOU may be ſure I have not of late paſſed my time the moſt agreeably in the world, not having ſeen the Marqueſs of Soberton theſe ten days. He had, it is true, at his laſt viſit, prepared me for the pain of this abſence, by a plea of invincible neceſſity, of which he did not, indeed, ſpecify the particulars, but

but I have reaſon to think him wholly taken up with the management of certain affairs he has in charge from his father, which, it ſeems, do not allow him the leiſure of a reſort to town. But what yet hurts me more, is to find his Lordſhip ſtill remain ſo affected with his late loſs, that it gives him an air of penſiveneſs, reſerve, and chagreen, which appears to keep all tenderer ſentiments of love at a diſtance. I do not wiſh him leſs the ſon, but I ſhould not be ſorty if he was more the lover.

I ſhould, however, in my uneaſineſs certainly have contrived a viſit to Lady Clifford at Peterſham, where, he now ſtays, but that I could not

well go without Lady Lovell, who is detained at home, as well as in a great meaſure myſelf, by a very untoward accident.

Lord Lovell was, about eight days ago, at a tavern, which he had never before uſed, with ſome whom, by a prophanation of terms, he calls friends, and ſetting up till very late in the morning, the whole company was, it ſeems, greatly overheated with wine, when there aroſe, between Mr. Salway and my brother, a violent diſpute, upon ſome extremely frivolous point, I think it was about the color of a race-horſe, which one inſiſted was black, the other bay. This difference, on ſo very a trifle, brought,

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nevertheleſs, on ſuch high words, that the reſt of the company interpoſed, and the affair appeared to be amicably terminated; on Mr. Salway's ſide it certainly was. But my brother, whether the more piqued for his having been the more in the wrong, which, I am told, he unqueſtionably was, on the parting of the company, ſtaid behind in the room, giving Mr. Salway, by a pull on the ſleeve, an intimation that he had ſomething to ſay to him. The reſt of the Gentlemen, in much the ſame plight of intoxication, had not minded this geſture of my brother's, and went out without dreaming of the conſequences. Mr. Salway ſtaid, and Lord Lovell inſtantly ſhutting to the door, com-

pelled him, againſt his every proteſta-
tion and intreaty, to draw his ſword,
which at length he did, purely in
his own defence; and endeavoured, as
much as he could, conſiſtently with
his own ſafety, to avoid doing my
brother any miſchief; till receiving
from his mad fury, a wound in his
ſword arm, and dreading ſtill worſe,
he ran him through the body, miſſing,
as it has happened, the vital parts.
My brother falling, and the doors be-
ing burſt open by the waiters, Mr.
Salway had the generoſity not to leave
him, but, at the hazard of his own
loſs of liberty, to ſtay by and take
care of him. Accordingly, a proper
carrriage was inſtantly provided, when
Mr. Salway, who was but a new and
ſuperficial

ſuperficial acquaintance of my brother's, introduced as a bottle companion, not ſo much as knowing where he lived, but on a groſs gueſs that it might be at his mother's, gave directions for his being carried thither, he himſelf being determined, as he actually did, to ſurrender himſelf to any demand of juſtice.

It was, then, about four in the morning that my poor brother was brought home, ſpeechleſs, motionleſs, to our houſe, which was, on this occaſion, knocked up; and while the chairmen were ſetting him down, with as much gentleneſs as could be, in the hall, Lady Lovell, alarmed with the noiſe, came down, and found her ſon pale,

dead, in all appearance, and weltering in his own blood. What a ſight for the tendereſt of mothers! It flung her inſtantly into fits. The ſervants did not wait for her recovery out of them to ſend for two ſurgeons, both of whom came, and having examined the wound, declared, that it had only gone through the fleſhy part of the breaſt near the arm-pit, and they would anſwer with their lives there was no danger but from the loſs of blood, or a fever ſupervening on ſo bad a habit of body as they apprehended in his Lordſhip, from his inflammatory way of living. By this time Lord Lovell had recovered his ſenſes, and the firſt uſe he made of them was totally to clear Mr. Salway, who he hoped had received no hurt,

hurt, taking all the blame on himſelf, as the aggreſſor. I ſay nothing to you of my ſenſations on this occaſion, you will eaſily conceive them.

Mean while our ſteward did a very ſenſible thing: conſidering the pain which the publication of this incident would give to all parties, he ſent round to the editors of the news-papers to have it ſuppreſſed.

As for Lord Lovell, he had loſt a great deal of blood, and the fever, which the ſurgeons had feared, actually did come on, and with a violence that manifeſted great danger.

Lady Lovell hardly ever ſtirred from his bedſide, and conſtantly watched him

herſelf. Now it was that ſhe began to reflect with grief and confuſion, on the fatal epoch of that courſe of riots and diſſipation, which had brought him into his preſent condition; an epoch, which ſhe very rightly connected with the termination of his pretentions to you, on your rejection of his ſuit, which, whether that ſuit was honorable or not, had wounded at leaſt his vanity, if not his love, to ſuch a degree, as drove him to that miſerable recourſe.

But this was terribly confirmed to her by his frequently invoking the name of Clara in his delirium, entreating your pardon, confeſſing his wrong, and, at whiles, outrageouſly reproaching

ing you for your barbarity, your diſ-dain, and the like.

The effect this had on Lady Lovell would be unconceivable, but for one juſt reflexion. Her ſtrong averſion to Lord Lovell's being what ſhe would call mis-allied, was purely the ſuggeſtion of opinion, but the ſaving her ſon's life was a dictate of nature, over the ſentiments of which faſhion has very little empire.

There was nothing ſhe had more ardently deſired, than to ſee him married according to her ſyſtem of quality-matches; ſhe had, ſince your reducing him to deſpair of you, propoſed to him Lady Catharine Beaumont, who

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is very far from diſagreeable, and has rather a good fortune for an Earl's younger daughter; but my brother would not hearken to it; and, to do him juſtice, I ſincerely believe, that if he had ſeen the leaſt glimpſe of an opening to renew with you, he would, with all his fierce declarations againſt the nuptial ſtate, have, on your acceptance of him, been very glad to "Benedick" it. Of this I am ſure, he has very heartily repented the ridiculous ideas that had led him into thoſe impertinences to Mrs. Buckley and to you.

Lady Lovell, on her part, is touched to the ſoul with the recollection of the injurioufneſs of her behaviour to you,

and

and indeed has long ſeen you in a light worthier of you, worthier of herſelf, while nothing but falſe ſhame, the natural iſſue of falſe pride, has hindered her from aſking your pardon in form; mine ſhe has actually condeſcended to do, and gives me great credit for my choice of ſo eſtimable a friend. I do not, however, tell you, that the danger of my brother had not ſome ſhare in this relenting of her's. Her apprehenſions for his life, in which I verily believe her own is wrapped up, and her fears of his relapſing, if he ſhould recover, into the ſame courſe, have greatly turned her thoughts to a wiſh of what ſhe once ſo much dreaded. Not content with ſoothing him, and humoring his bent, which, whether he is in his delirium, or out of it,

it, ſhe obſerves ſtrong towards you, by hints, and ambiguous aſſurances of a willingneſs to comply with any thing that would make him happy; for, if the declaration had been more direct, he would probably have ſuſpected it of deſign; not content, I ſay, with this, ſhe has ſeriouſly, in the way of aſking my advice, ſounded me about any hopes there might be entertained of your accepting her advances to you.

She was already in theſe diſpoſitions, when a fit more violent than any of the preceding ones, and attended with his uſual ravings on you, for your name has been conſtantly repeated in them, has ſo renewed her dread of the worſt to him, eſpecially as the Phiſicians their-

ſelves

ſelves appear very diffident of the iſſue, that ſhe begged of me to write to you an aſſurance of her ſentiments of the utmoſt regard, and deſire of making you every reparation in her power for what had paſſed.

My brother's fit went off ſooner than any before had done, and a profound ſleep ſucceeding, at his awaking there appeared a viſible alteration for the better, the Phiſicians gave us the greateſt hopes of him, and the Surgeons, on viſiting the dreſſings, confirmed their opinion of the danger being, humanly ſpeaking, well over.

Lady Lovell, overjoyed at this, was ſo far from retracting her intentions,

that ſhe deſired me, a-freſh to apply to you, adding, that ſhe would herſelf write to you to the ſame purpoſe.

Here, my worthy girl, you have the ſatisfaction of having, without your deigning to give yourſelf any the leaſt trouble about it, obtained a double victory, over my brother's folly, and my mother's pride. She ſincerely lays it at your feet, and, I dare ſwear, you are much too generous not to forgive an offence to you, that was more the effect of their weakneſs, than of any badneſs of heart. The faſhionable way of thinking of the times, had, doubtleſs, too much ſhare in the ſeveral errors of both. From reſpect, I refrain from dwelling on my mother's foible; but, from the

firſt,

firſt, I ever thought my brother was taking a way with you that would never carry him to any end but diſappointment and confuſion. To obtain your love, he ought to have begun with laying himſelf out to win your eſteem, which he was not very likely to do by ſhowing that he had none for you. But I heartily wiſh you would think he has been ſeverely enough puniſhed, and ſacrifice ſomething of your juſtice to a mother's tenderneſs, and to your friendſhip for a ſiſter, who has ever paſſionately deſired to ſee the tie of it drawn cloſer by ſuch an alliance. I know you too well to urge it to you on any ſuch motive of advantages as the world would annex to ſuch an offer; the moſt that I could hope would be your forgiving thoſe

advantages to us, ſure that you are more like to conſider them as objections, than as inducements to your yielding to our entreaties, call them our ſupplications if you will.

In all events, it is a great relief to me, to think that Lady Lovell repents and repairs, at length, her wrongs to you, as far as it is in her power. You cannot conceive the pain which her injurious and unprovoked treatment of you gave me, nor do I think the atonement ſhe now makes leſs than what you deſerve. Of your forgiveneſs I have not the leaſt doubt, my only fear is, that you will not accept the offer that accompanies the entreaty of it.

My

My beſt, my ſincereſt reſpects to the worthy Mrs. Buckley. What is it ſhe might not command from me for a retaining fee, to be our advocate with you in this cauſe; a cauſe of honor, of compaſſion, of love, and of friendſhip? I have the more hopes of it, for her having been offended; as I have ſuch an opinion of her ſpirit, that ſhe will, I flatter myſelf, look on the favor ſhe will do us as the nobleſt way of ſhewing how little ſhe deſerved her ſhare in the indignity.

Yours, &c.

HARRIET LOVELL.

LET-

LETTER XX.

Lady LOVELL *to Miſs* CLARA MAYNWARING.

Dear Miſs, *London.*

I Am very ſenſible of my having been much in the wrong to you and to Mrs. Buckley. My aſking you both pardon for it is but a duty in courſe, and I acquit myſelf of it with great pleaſure. But there is more yet; I owe you a more eſſential reparation, both for my ſon and ſelf. This will, with great propriety, ariſe from the motive itſelf of the injury. The falſe light

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in which I then ſaw things has given way to juſter ſentiments: I am very ſincerely the convert of your virtues. The prejudices which made me blind to ſo much worth, are totally diſſipated, and you have not only my conſent, but my wiſh, that your acceptance of Lord Lovell may be the ſeal of your forgiveneſs.

Yours, &c.

ARABELLA LOVELL.

LET-

LETTER XXI.

Miſs CLARA MAYNWARING *to Lady* LOVELL.

My Lady, *Richmond.*

IN anſwer to your Ladyſhip's letter, which breathes the trueſt ſpirit of nobility, in the diſdain it implies of leaving any cauſe of complaint to ſubſiſt, I have the honor to aſſure you, that both Mrs. Buckley and myſelf are extremely penetrated with your condeſcention, and have not ſo much as the ſhadow left of a diſagreeable remembrance of any thing that has

paſſed,

paſſed, with reſpect to your Lady-ſhip or to Lord Lovell.

I have, then, to entreat of your Ladyſhip, I will not ſay the favor, but the juſtice, to believe that nothing of that kind has any ſhare in my declining, with all humility, with all gratitude, the great and unmerited honor propoſed to me, with ſo much goodneſs, with ſo much condeſcenſion, in the concluſion of your letter. My true and ſole reaſon is, that I am perfectly certain of its not being in my power to make your ſon happy, and I leave yourſelf to judge, whether, under ſuch a conviction, it would not be a baſe, ungrateful return from me, for ſuch a proof

of your good opinion, were I to take so unfair an advantage of it. In every other point but that, for which I may, indeed, deserve your pity, but never your blame, you may command me without reserve, as I am, with the most heart-felt gratitude, and the most profound respect,

Your Ladyship's, &c.

CLARA MAYNWARING.

LET-

LETTER XXII.

Miſs CLARA MAYNWARING *to Lady* HARRIET LOVELL.

Dear Lady HARRIET, *Richmond.*

I INCLOSE you, under cover and a flying ſeal, my anſwer to your good mother, but wiſh you, before you give it a peruſal, to read this I am now writing to you.

It was not without much pain and concern, that I obſerved the diſaſter befallen to Lord Lovell, and am very happy that you give me room to hope that he is now out of danger.

I am withall greatly edified at Lady Lovell's at once noble and tender procedure towards me and Mrs. Buckley, while nothing hardly could more ſeverely afflict me than the impoſſibility of my availing myſelf of the occaſion that ſeems to offer ſo fair for ſtrengthening, if that were needful, our ties of friendſhip with thoſe of affinity.

I flatter myſelf, that you know me too well to think me capable of grimace, of art, and leſs yet ſurely of inſolence, or ill-nature. But eſpecially you would cruelly wrong me if you did not believe me ready to make the greateſt ſacrifices to my regard for you. In the preſent point,

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my ſituation is really diſtreſsful. Your friendſhip induces you to wiſh me ſo great a good as an alliance to you, for I leave the other advantages out of the queſtion, and I am forced to appear, in the declining it, ungrateful, while I am only adhering to an inviolable principle with me, which oppoſes to your kind intentions towards me, an invincible bar.

How often have you and I ſettled the point, that there was not only great weakneſs, but great baſeneſs, in thoſe of either ſex, giving their conſent to marry, where that conſent had not the ſanction of inclination! It is cruelty to oneſelf, it is injuſtice to the perſon accepted. Where

there is a ſincerity of love on one ſide, and nothing but a regard for convenience on the other, the one in this laſt caſe, who yields to a union on ſuch different motives, gives one no idea but that of a mercenary for life. You may ſay that love may come afterwards; as I know nothing of the nature of love, but believe it a reſpectable paſſion, from ſuch characters as I myſelf know and ſee made happy by it, I cannot ſay to the contrary of ſuch a ſuppoſition; but this I know, ſpeaking only for myſelf, I ſhould not care to run the riſk of it, or expect a happineſs, any hopes of which I ſhould have begun with forfeiting by the commiſſion of at once a meanneſs and an injuſtice.

I ſhould

I ſhould alſo be the more culpable for my utter diſregard to thoſe tirants of opinion, titular diſtinctions, and matter of intereſt. But allowing to them even much more weight than ever their intrinſic worth can deſerve, I have no conception of their out-ballancing, eſpecially in our ſex, that proteſtation, made by an undepraved heart, in its ſimplicity of nature, againſt ſuch a ſacrifice of liberty, of contentment, of delicacy, and, let me juſtly add, even of modeſty, to an union unauthoriſed by inclination. I do not by this mean that inclination alone ſuffiſes, but that it is an indiſpenſable eſſential, and that the whole ceremonial without it, is an abſolute prophanation. Only think, dear Lady Harriet, of the

horror, and, perhaps, the moral impoſſibility of honoring, and obeying, where the loving is not in one's power. The heart is an arbitrary monarch, independent of our Reaſon, though never, unleſs through weakneſs, in oppoſition to it, and though it hardly ever aſks leave of it, for its love, its averſions, or its indifference. Perhaps it would be better if it was otherwiſe, but we muſt take nature as we find her, and, in my poor opinion, there is rarely any thing abſtituted to her with advantage. In general, the Law of the heart is the Law of Reaſon; at leaſt, I am perfectly ſure, it is ſo, in the caſe of refuſing to marry without inclination, the want of which is never imputable, ſince it is always involuntary;

luntary; our will being no more at our command than our faith.

There is alſo in this diſpenſation of nature ſomething very juſt, there is nothing in a refuſal that detracts from the merit of the perſon refuſed, any more than an acceptance adds to it. This is moſt clearly, moſt equitably ſolved by that arbitrarineſs of the will. Otherwiſe the preference given to one over a number of others would be injurious to them; but that is never the caſe. Vanity indeed may take offence at it, but when was vanity every juſt? To bring this home to the point, may I, dear Lady Harriet, rely enough on your friendſhip for your acquitting me in your own heart of any unkindneſs in my declining

what now appears offered to me, or of any the leaſt thought of diſreſpect to your brother, who ſtands reſtored, in full right, to my regard for him, if but on your account? But as that my regard is quite of a different nature from love, and never can, I am intimately perſuaded, reſolve into it; judge yourſelf whether it ſtands with my ſincere affection for you, or even with common gratitude to Lord Lovell, for me to do him ſuch an injury as to avail myſelf of his blind partiality for me, to render myſelf his partner in every thing but love, which is the great eſſential. Do you imagine, that my want of it could eſcape his diſcernment, or when diſcerned not mortally wound his delicacy? No. I had rather, than commit ſuch a per-

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fidy to you, to him, to your family, that he ſhould think and ſay of me, that ſince I declined him, I did not deſerve him.

In this apology, however, my ever dear friend, my ardent deſire of your fair conſtruction has drawn me into almoſt a diſſertation in form, upon a caſe which I ſhould imagine common enough, for me to have nothing new to ſay on it. I recommend myſelf with full confidence to your candor, and eſpecially to your friendſhip, in the ſpirit of which, your deſire to find me not unworthy of it, will ſupply any deficiency of my juſtification.

Mrs. Buckley preſents her moſt tender reſpects to you, and aſſures

you of a thorough oblivion of any paſſed diſguſt at your houſe. You did her but juſtice in taking it for granted, that ſhe was incapable of letting any reſentment overcome her generoſity. She ſincerely loves and eſteems you, and was rather inclining to that ſide which your great friendſhip for me has engaged you to eſpouſe, till her examination of my reaſons, and the weighing my oppoſition of ſentiments, ſet her right in her opinion of my procedure.

Yours, &c.

CLARA MAYNWARING.

LET-

LETTER XXIII.

Lady HARRIET LOVELL *to Miſs* CLARA MAYNWARING.

London.

My incomparable friend,

IF my life depended on aſcertaining which moſt prevailed in me, affliction for the refuſal contained in your letter, or admiration of that dignity of your ſpirit, which does honor to our ſex, I could not decide the diſpute.

I gave your letter to Lady Lovell, whoſe emotions I watched while ſhe was peruſing it. They might be, and

I rather

I rather believe they were, at firſt, thoſe of a pride not a little hurt by what I am ſure ſhe did not expect, your declining her offer. But this ſenſation ſoon ſubſided into the conſideration of that modeſt unoffenſive turn you gave to your non-acceptance. If ſhe felt the force, ſhe felt the juſtice of it too; and I am perſuaded is ſincerely ſorry for her former treatment of you, which your forgiving her, is but a reaſon the more for her not forgiving herſelf. You have really made her feel that there is a nobility of ſouls infinitely ſuperior to that of blood, and of which ſhe had not before ſo much as a conception. But as none are more apt to admire an act of ſublime virtue than

than thoſe who have laughed at it in theory on judging it unreducible to practice, Lady Lovell unaffectedly acknowledges your great worth, while, I can aſſure you, no remains of her former notions of mis-alliance, interfere to leſſen her preſent vexation at loſing the hopes of ſo deſirable a match for her ſon. Her fears for him are now renewed, not for his illneſs, the danger of which may be pronounced pretty well over, but for what courſe he will take on his recovery. She has not yet communicated to him your anſwer, though ſhe only waits a favorable moment for it, as he conſtantly perſecutes both her and me to interpoſe with you in his favor, alas! in vain. I am

really

really myſelf in great pain for how he will take it.

I was going on, but was obliged to drop my pen, on Lord Soberton's coming in. He has kept me a good two hours, chiefly talking of you. He was that moment come from my brother's apartment, whom he was greatly pleaſed to ſee in ſo fair a way. As I knew Lord Lovell's paſſion for you had been no ſecret, I thought it no indiſcretion to communicate your letter to him. It was not approbation he gave to your procedure; no, it was a rapture of applauſe. He made me repeat all the particulars, many which he had often heard me mention before, of every thing that had

had paſſed between Lady Lovell, Lord Lovell, and you: and all of them appeared to me to make upon him an impreſſion of novelty and of pleaſure. In ſhort, he admires you ſo much, that I dare hope you will have no ſcruple againſt my taking him into partnerſhip of your friendſhip, the moſt precious of all my preſent poſſeſſions.

My reſpects to Mrs. Buckley, they are always in courſe, for they are always in my heart, expreſſed or not expreſſed.

Yours,

HARRIET LOVELL.

LET-

LETTER XXIV.

Earl LOVELL *to Miſs* CLARA MAYNWARING.

Miſs, *London.*

IT is with a hand trembling, and ſcarce yet recovered enough to hold a pen, that my impatience to lay my ſentiments before you, urges me to the giving you this trouble.

Lady Lovell communicated to me this morning the anſwer which you had made to her inſtances on my behalf. This, conſidering the pain which

the

ſhe might very juſtly conclude it would occaſion to me, could not, in my preſent condition, have been extorted from her by leſs than the expreſſion to her of my fears, that ſhe had been only aiming at tranquilliſing me with the falſe hopes, not only of her conſent, but of her intereſting herſelf for my happineſs, in the reparation which ſhe really owed you. I find I wronged her, and that the ſtroke of death to all my hopes, to all my wiſhes, comes from yourſelf.

There has been a time, when ſuch a blow would have deeply hurt my vanity; but that weakneſs having been long driven out of exiſtence, long extinguiſhed by you, I had no ſenſi-

bility

bility left, but for the cruel diſappoint-
ment to my love; that love, which
has been but the ſtronger for all my
ſtruggles to ſhake myſelf looſe of it.
I ſought in vain to drown it in a
courſe of diſſipation; for ſtill it kept
faſt hold of me, and by its diſdain of
ſubmitting to the force of my vices
and follies, proved to me that it was
a virtue. It is, angelic Clara, to you
that I am indebted for the diſcovery
of my having ſuch a thing as a heart;
it lay dead and buried to me in my
breaſt, under a heap of rubbiſh, till
you awakened it to life, by the double
wound of love and deſpair. You have
opened to me a new world within me,
and given me a view of a greater
manner of exiſtence. Fool that I was

to

to imagine, that one of your incomparable merit was to be won by a total want of any! I ſhall, however, ſtrike this advantage out of this overwhelming misfortune, or rather out of the juſt ſenſe of the demerit to which I owe it, that it will be henceforward a perpetual goad, a noble incentive to me, to render myſelf leſs unworthy of you, and to leſſen the diſtance that your ſuperiority over me places between us. My future life ſhall be one continued endeavor to repair the errors of the paſt, and to retrieve the time I have loſt, together with myſelf, in wretched nonſenſe and frivolous delights.

I hope

I hope the bottom of my heart is not deſperately bad, though the ſurface of it has belonged to every folly that faſhion could authoriſe, or depravity of taſte adopt. It was reſerved for a love, which I muſt not call wholly diſaſtrous, ſince it has been productive to me of ſo deſirable an effect, to make me ſenſible of the dignity of my being, and to reſcue me out of the ignoble career, in which I was running to waſte.

Your refuſal, and the motive of it, which I muſt ſuppoſe, though you ſpare me the mention of it, have recalled me to myſelf, or rather to my duty to myſelf.

I ſhall

I ſhall not, then, quite in vain have dared to love you, ſince my future virtues will be your gift, and the reſtoration of me to the paths of honor your work. Yes! heavenly Clara, I am ſincerely your convert; nor is the cure of a coxcomb ſurely among the leaſt of miracles. You have opened my eyes for ever on my paſt worthleſſneſs, and made me ſalutarily ridiculous to myſelf. Nor needs the ſuddenneſs of my converſion render its duration ſuſpected: I am abundantly defended from all fear of a relapſe, by the cleareſt conviction of the incomparably greater joys to be found in that ſtate of grace with myſelf, into which I am now entering, than in the

reduction

reduction to practice of the utmoſt riots of a ſeduced imagination. Not yet quite recovered of my illneſs, and even amidſt the horrors of my deſpair of you, I have felt more ſolid, more exquiſite delight in barely the thought of getting into a way leſs unworthy of myſelf, than ever was realiſed to me in the actual gratification of ſilly vanity and falſe pleaſure.

Such, then, is my deep, my heart-felt obligation to you. Nor will I preſume to hope your friendſhip, (for I muſt not mention the word love on a line with that of hope,) till my conduct ſhall have ſatisfied you of my being leſs undeſerving of your favor-

able

able opinion, than I now ſeverely, but ſerviceably feel and confeſs myſelf.

In the mean while, my pureſt reſpects, my beſt wiſhes attend for ever the divine Clara, to whom I remain, ſincerely and unalterably,

—— the moſt obliged, devoted,

and faithful humble ſervant,

LOVELL.

LETTER XXV.

The Marquess of SOBERTON *to* LAUNCELOT GREVILLE, *Esq*; *at* ——, *in Gloucestershire.*

Petersham.

My ever honored Friend,

YOUR last contained a tender reproach, which I am sorry to say I too justly deserved, for my being in arrears to you, the answer of two letters. You are very sensible this is a failure of which I am very seldom culpable, as I can hardly conceive a greater impertinence than a neglect

neglect of punctiliousness in this duty, which may so properly be placed among the small morals, that are nevertheless of such great account in civil life. The not answering a superior must be a silly madness; an equal, an unpardonable impoliteness; but an inferior, the height of ignoble insolence and rank brutality. Yet we are not always to condemn in a hurry, for fear of having our judgment to reverse. Do you remember what a passion Dr. Elrington was in, at his not receiving an answer from Lord Chipley to a letter, in which he was doing him an essential service, till I quieted him, by telling him, that I believed the poor man could not read, but was

very ſure he could not write. I am, however, ſo far happy, that I can depend on your having made the moſt fair conſtruction of my ſilence; perhaps a fairer one than I deſerve; for, not to diſſemble with you, I have had ſome ſmall repugnance to write to you, from a conſciouſneſs of having ſomething to ſay, which I could not well, without a violation of friendly confidence, ſuppreſs, and of which I can clearly anticipate your diſapprobation, ſince I am actually ſuffering under my own.

I have received a letter from my father at Spaw, by which it is plain he has not yet recovered the blow given him by our common, ſevere,

and

and unexpected loss of my dear mother, upon which he has given me some orders, relative to his affairs, that greatly confine me. He has especially forbid my going to him, as he proposes soon to return to Britain, but means to take so great a circumflex, as his intended trial of the waters of Barege may require. I do not find that those of Spaw have touched the bottom of his disorder, though the exercise of the journey, and the regimen that goes with those waters, had at first a temporary appearance of alleviating his complaints.

As to your recommendation of Mr. Mowbray's suit for a pension, you could not, for the injustice you

did me, in conſtruing too rigorouſly my general declaration againſt all penſions, make me a more agreeable reparation, than by throwing in my way this opportunity of making juſt diſtinctions.

I have, it is true, an invincible horror againſt thoſe penſions which are obtained from the Court, as tacit recompences for the ſacrifices of national intereſt, or as the bribes of a vile acquieſcence where oppoſition is a duty; in either of theſe caſes, the accepters may juſtly be ſaid, to eat the black bread of treaſon, ſopped in the kennels of corruption.

Nor, indeed, have I a much better opinion of thoſe genteel Paupers caſt on the charity of their country, without any the leaſt title to it, and with a much worſe grace than the vulgar poor are put into a work-houſe, where they become neceſſarily a rent-charge on the providence of a pariſh. For theſe ſplendid beggars, in all the triumph of worthleſſneſs and idleneſs, to roll about in chariots, to ſtrut in embroidery, or to dazzle you with an offenſive glare of plate on their ſide-boards, is ſuch an inſult on that nation, from whom they do nothing to deſerve it, unleſs an implicitly inſlaved vote be a merit, as that nation well deſerves which can or will endure it.

But there is another kind of penſions, for which I want words to expreſs my ſcorn and indignation: penſions, extorted by a pretence to patriotiſm, forſooth! that nauſeous ſtale reſource of diſappointed ambition, or of fortune-hunting impoſture: when ſuch as on the ſtrength of an influence, which they could never have obtained by great talents or by real virtues, have been enabled to make their own terms with a weak ill-adviſed Court, and render the Crown itſelf tributary to their powers of falſe patriotiſm, falſe politics, falſe eloquence, falſe "every thing."

Nor do I think thoſe others quite blameleſs, who, when their country

appears

appears like a bare carcase, devoured to the bone by the State-vultures, not to mention the vermin ingendered in the putrescent mass, can so meanly, not to say worse, stipulate for the scandalous superlucration of pensions and reversions, as considerations for their most gratious acceptance of great places going a begging, through that portentous confusion and iniquity of the times, which deters or disgusts men of character from intermeddling with the state. In this, these are, I confess, very wrong; for it is then they are the most necessary: then is the time for every man to stand to his arms, and run to the breach, not to be defaulters to their country at its greatest need. But their aid to be valuable, or indeed effectual,

ſhould not be mercenary. As to thoſe who inſiſt on money or lucrative conſiderations for taking their refuſals, I leave you, or any man of ſenſe or honor, to judge, what ſort of ſervice can or ought to be expected from perſonages capable of ſo infamouſly factious an extortion, ſuch an unconſtitutional ſubjecting to the rack-rent of avarice and inſolence that country of theirs, which is, it ſeems, of no more worth to them, than what they can ſell it for, or ſqueeze out of it. Of this, however, I am certain, that if this ſordid, abject, family-ſpirit does not ſoon meet with an effectual check from the powers of the conſtitution, properly exerted, it will entirely ſwallow up the public ſpirit, and

and with it every hope of national salvation.

But as to the pensions given for real service to the nation, I can hardly conceive a nobler use of the public money, than that of manifesting public gratitude, where the claim is clearly made out, and not too lightly taken for evinced, on the impudence of imposture, making its sport of the vulgar credulity. The truth is, that from my readiness to allow the justice and fitness of bestowing pensions on those who have clearly titles to them, springs, in some measure, my reprobation of that shameful profusion of the national treasure, squandered away on imposture, on worthlessness, or on corrup-

tion, to ſuch a degree as muſt render it difficult to ſpare what is due to real pretentions; eſpecially, as in the preſent courſe of things, the wretch of intereſt is ſure to be preferred to the man of merit, againſt whom the people of power have ever that ſort of prejudice natural to mediocrity, or to worſe than mediocrity, when it gets into place.

It was preciſely, then, my conviction of Mr. Mowbray's clear right to the object of his ſuit, that made me the more diffident of my obtaining for him a propitious iſſue. I know that he has not only run out an eſtate, (which, if not a great one, was at leaſt his all,) ſtrictly ſpeaking, in the ſervice of his country,

while

while others were scandalously getting stupendous fortunes, in channels the most destructive to it, that the malice of hell could devise; but that he has also greatly suffered in his constitution, and twice ran the risk of his life among the enemies in the late war, in a very delicate commission, which he executed with great success. After all which, he was condemned to forfeit all his claim to recompence, by his meritoriously giving his vote, in favor of a very worthy honest man, set up by the Public Justice to that character, in opposition to one of the most dirty, contemptible rascals, that ever disgraced the patronage of power, and who was countenanced by the Ministry, who, by the bye, rarely countenance any other kind of subjects;

in

in which they remind me of a sitting Alderman, who, during the late war, on a man's being brought before him for a villainous misdemeanour, recommended him to a regulating Captain, "as a fit person to serve the King."

In compliance, however, with your recommendation, and, indeed, with my own desire to serve, if possible, so worthy a man, I forced myself to go to the Minister's levee, having never been at one before. You know, I presume, that that is a place of great trade, but as there are no staple commodities at that market but implicit votes or servile interest, in which, I hope, I shall have the grace never to deal, either as buyer or seller, I appeared with all the free-

dom

dom and dis-ingagement of a simple spectator.

But I am ashamed to tell you, since it is so much at the expence of my humanity, that I could not help enjoying the diverting sight of the groupe of animals in waiting, that were making circle to the *Ministrissimo*, who was, with the utmost aukwardness, proportioning himself to the different degrees of his noble attendants and waiters. To some he threw into his looks an air of statelines and superiority, that I should have wondered, if I had not known or guessed the personages who were exposed to it, that they did not burst out a laughing in his face: but it was in-

finitely

finitely worfe yet, when addreffing himfelf to perfons, whofe fortune, title, and rank awed him, though they had no right to awe him, fince they could be mean enough to defcend fo low as to an attendance upon him; he put on fuch a fine fimper of gratious affability and princely protection, as made me tremble for fear of not keeping my breakfaft upon my ftomach.

Among them, who do you think I fhould fee, and who would have blufhed, if that had been in his power, for my catching him there, but the "third Cato" dropped from the clouds, Maskill, Member for Windborough, that fierce, that independent railer

againft

againſt Courts and Miniſters, till they were either ſilly or vindictive enough to muzzle him with a place, in which they could not but know he would cut a moſt ridiculous figure. The offer was no ſooner made him than the ſtroller bit at it, and all his plaiſter and varniſh of patriotiſm cracked, peeled, and came off with the firſt ray of the Court ſun-ſhine. Do you remember my prediction of it at our hearing him from the gallery, theatrically ſpouting away rants of declamation in favor of his poor, dear, injured country, in a fine tragedy-tone, that reminded us of Harlequin, at Paris, in Columbine's cloaths, crying out with a burleſc pathos,

pathos, "*O Caro Padre! O amato Conſorte!*"

I obſerved there, too, Lord Champignon, who has, at leaſt, the merit of not adding hipocriſy to that avarice, which makes him ſet that intrepid face of his to every deſtructive meaſure that a Miniſtry, as ignorant of the national intereſts as of their own, could put him on: and this, not out of any hatred, at his heart, to his country, but out of his ſuperior love for half-a-crown, to which he would, if it lay in his way, ſacrifice half-a-dozen countries, and throw that delightful, precious ſoul of his into the bargain. He is the only one I know, who makes open profeſſion of a contempt

for

for all principle, and has, upon that foot, in defiance of the public, hoisted the ſtandard of corruption, and marched victoriouſly againſt his country, drums beating and colors flying, for which he has been rewarded according to the ſyſtem of the times, with a title and a fortune.

I am ſure I ſhould ſicken you if I was to particulariſe to you the gallery of originals I remarked there, which would, indeed, be ſuperfluouſly offenſive to you, for there is ſuch a ſame ſtupid uniformity in the ſheep-mark of that rotten flock, that your knowing one gives you to know the whole mutton-headed ſpecies, always ready to jump as the ſilly bell-weather leads.

As

As to the miniſter himſelf, he appeared, at the firſt ſight of me, not a little embarraſſed at my ſtrange appearance where he could ſo little expect it, from the profound contempt in which he knew I held him, and which his vanity hindered him from returning. For though, among men, no debt is, generally ſpeaking, more faithfully repaid than contempt for contempt, the vain alone have not, it ſeems, that relief of deſpiſing thoſe who deſpiſe them: they are too much hurt not to hate; and hate not only excludes contempt, but implies, in ſome degree, a fear, produced by a humiliation.

I will

I will not here, however, ascribe to this last sentiment the readiness with which he gave me audience. Possibly curiosity to know what brought me there might have its share in procuring me that dispatch.

Making up to me, then, with an affected eagerness of the most gratious disposition, he desired to know to what it was he was happy enough to owe the honor of seeing me.

As I knew him false, narrow-minded, of a costive head and a cold heart, incapable of seeing objects as they really are, and ignorant to so great a degree, that he took the rote of forms to be the very quintessence of affairs,

which

which rote, too, was dictated to him by little creatures and fecondaries of offices, I did not amufe myfelf with opening the point of my bufinefs with him by a preamble of Mr. Mowbray's merit, of his fervices, and, in fhort, of the juftice of his fuit, which made the iffue of it an honor to the perfon who fhould procure him the recompence, and not a favor to the petitioner. All this, I knew, would be words in wafte to a man who had no conception of the ideas they were defigned to convey: I told him, then, with great politenefs, but firmly, that the Duke and myfelf expected that a regard fhould be paid to our recommendation of this gentleman to the penfion, of his fuit for which I knew

him

him pre-acquainted, and of which the event would in a great measure depend on him, the sovereign dispenser of his master's favors. To this I did not add one syllable that could be construed into a menace, though perhaps the equivalent of one was in the tone of superiority with which I spoke, and which rather belonged to the justice of the plea I was urging, than to any air of arrogance or presumption I was giving myself.

In answer to this my requisition, he started the objection of the vote given against the known disposition of the Court, and concluded with asking me, if I would not think that Minister a pitiful fellow that would not take away a

pension,

penſion, and much more not refuſe one, in ſuch a caſe.

A hare beating a drum could not have diverted me more, than that inſinuation of political courage by a man who had not a ſpark of it, unleſs againſt any in ſuch an inferior condition of life, that to oppreſs them was cowardice itſelf. I only then anſwered him, with all the coolneſs of contempt, that I could not imagine a greater indignity offered to a miniſter, than the ſuppoſing him mean enough to expect or accept the ſacrifice of conſcientious opinion, a ſacrifice which was nothing better than the homage of a ſlave, to the ſlave of ſome miſerable Court-plan, in oppoſition to the intereſt of the nation. That I did not, however,

however, apply to him to give him lessons of politics, and less yet to receive them from him, that I only desired to know upon what it was I had to depend, that I might acquaint my father of his answer, and take my measures accordingly.

Now, whether this peremptory manner of treating him overawed him or not, I will not pretend to say, or upon what motives he yielded, but yield he did, and the pension is now actually secured to your friend, upon the most honorable terms he could wish, without condition or reserve, and expressly as it should be, as a reward of his merit.

As soon, however, as I had got my answer I left the levee-room, glad to breath a less putrid air than that of a place, which, considering the prostitutes who were plying at it, had all the rankness of a brothel, of which the choice pieces were at once stupid, impudent, ill-favored, and rotten into the bargain.

Now, as to the obliging offer you write me Mrs. Williams makes, of keeping for me, against the next races, the apartment I occupied at her house the last year; be so good as to make her a handsome present, in my name, for the compliment, of which I do not propose to avail myself, as there is

is nothing I more firmly determine, than never punishing myself with another sight of that kind, which may divert whom it pleases, so it is not your humble servant.

To say the truth, I hate races because I love horses: because, having learnt from you to consider riding as an accomplishment indispensable to a gentleman, and having, in consequence, used my best endeavours to acquire it, I must naturally look with contempt upon an use made of them that has no relation, or at least a very remote one, to that attainment; because, too, I am grieved to see so noble, so praiseworthy a motive, as that of procuring fine breeds of that valuable animal, put

to so vile an use, as to be made the pretext of sacrificing so much time, money, taste, and character, to the abandoned stupidity of the present system of races, and assemblies at races, compounded as they are of the dirty, despicable misteries of the turf, of the infamous chances of the hazard-table, and, perhaps, to crown all, of the noisy roar of a jollitry, raised by a wretched tartarous wine, the parent of so many lingering diseases and racking pains, as well as of so much lamentable nonsense.

It is, no doubt, far from being beneath men of fortune and rank to give their attention to the keeping up the breed of our horses; but would

not

not it be to the full as commendable for them to bestow some little pains on preserving their ownselves from degeneracy?

Besides, I am not very clear, that the generality of these noble horse-keepers do not make of it rather a point of parade, than of public utility; as the King of Siam maintains a white elephant, more for state than service. Among the egregious cullies of that kind of vanity, can you forget 'Squire Hobby, who, having a number of capital racers, some of them actually entered for the plate, thought it something of a mighty pretty air to exhibit himself, ambling about the course, on

on a ſcrub poney not worth fifty ſhillings?

As for thoſe ſharpers, or adventurers, who keep horſes for a livelihood, or the family-men, the bett-mongers, and the like locuſts of the green, I have nothing more to ſay, than that ſuch as are devoured by them very well deſerve their fate: for ſurely a ſett of duller wretches never exiſted: they have not an idea out of the horſe-courſe, or above the capacity of that animal, nor a word to convey an idea, but what is contained in the jocky-jargon, or cant of the turf.

Certainly, after all, a mere race-horſe is a thing of very little uſe, im-

plying no serviceableness for the road, the chace, or for war; unless, indeed, on such an occasion as the Battle of the Spurs in France, where the prize was for the fleetest run-away. As to the sport itself, a more unmanly, a more frivolous one can hardly be conceived, than that of seeing those creatures, under mercenary riding-grooms, put to their utmost speed, and straining every nerve, to convey not a single idea beyond the obvious one, that a horse with blood and breeding for the course must run rather swifter than a dray or a cart-horse. Then as to any honor of the victory, so much of it falls to the share of the horse and the jocky, that there is little left worth mentioning to the great keeper himself

of the running cattle, whose merit merely of property cannot be much superior to that of a good horse-dealer. For my part, I cannot see where the mighty great difference lies, of a man's having his mistress ridden for his pleasure, by a proxy, or his horse, for his honor, by a groom.

I own, I thought the anniversary race of the *Pallio* at Bologna stupid enough, in all conscience, though we could not help admiring the instinct of that noble animal, in the Barbary-coursers, who run for the prize without riders, and who consequently are not to be "*spoken with.*" There was at least something worth remark in the prancings, and exultations of the winning horse,

horse, on the prize, a piece of brocade being carried, with music, in state, before him; while the others followed with dejection of head, and dragging their legs after them. Such a triumph does not misbecome a horse, upon a victory all his own; but, in the name of common sense, where can there be in this to the two-legged owner any great matter of strut, especially too to the owner that does not ride him himself? Though I think I see the hardly suppressed swell of face of one of those immortal geniuses, for his horse the Black-joke having won the last King's plate, by the superior jocky-ship of Tom Collins, his riding-groom. Perhaps the growing sense of the emptiness and numbing stupidity of this diversion,

became the cauſe of ſeeking to render it more lively, more intereſting, by the addition of bets, in which caſe the remedy was ſurely worſe than the diſeaſe, ſince that villainous acceſſary has ſwallowed up the principal. Who does not now ſee, that the ſpirit of gambling has taken the lead of the ſpirit of racing, and diſtanced it out of ſight? Are even ſome of the illuſtrious ſprigs of our Nobility clear of that ſcoundrel-vice? There is Lord Pigeonnet: I do not ſay he will directly cheat you of half-a-crown on the turf-lay; no; but he will lay what he thinks a deviliſh clever train to make you cheat yourſelf; and triumph on his ſucceſs in ſuch a low, dirty piece of cunning, as much as any of his anceſtors could have done on the moſt heroic

deed of arms. There is worse yet; he will find among his noble compeers those that will or envy, or admire him for it. But this conformableness is no wonder; nothing more common than to see Knavery arm in arm with Folly, its banker. I know, however, the tenaciousness of an absurdity, reduced into sistem, too well to hope it will be soon exploded with the scorn it deserves. There is no privilege more dear, more sacred, to a fool, than that of persevering in his fooleries with an obstinacy that gloriously fills up to him all his void of reason; so that you may just as well crack your whip in the air, as aim the friendly lash at his nonsense. I think I see the figure of Folly with her tail held up by Fortune, and with

her broad unthinking face, ſticking her arms a-kimbo; with her ſtupid bloated inſolence, bidding defiance to Wiſdom, and telling her ſhe will do what ſhe pleaſes for all her.

To compleat the joke, there is nothing wanting but that ſome crazy Frenchman, bit with this pretious maggot, ſhould carry it to his country, and, in procuring the adoption of one of our follies, give us ſome revenge for the thouſands we have imported of theirs.

But let that be as it may, my life for it there will not, at the next races, be a horſe, an ideot, or a ſharper the leſs, for any proteſtations of taſte againſt

their

their futility, or of honor againſt the infamous ingraftment of gambling on that ſilly ſtock.

To ſay but the truth, moſt of our bubbles of faſhion live intrinſically as thoughtleſs as girls of the town, and with as little concern as they, for character, unleſs perhaps among one another, which is as much as to ſay, they dare not break herd for fear of the ridicule of thoſe they deſpiſe, for nothing is more certain than their commutual contempt. It is even their principle of coheſion. A fool is never more at eaſe than with a fool, if it is but for the ill-natured pleaſure of laughing at one another.

another. A dunce never gives quarter to a dunce.

Thus far, Sir, in answer to your letters, which has carried me to a length that, if I did not respect truth above every thing, I might ascribe to my deference to your advice of exercising, at once, the faculty of thinking, and the talent of writing in such confidential emanations from the heart, in the epistolary vein; but let me be more just to you, or at least anticipate the shrewdness of your conjecture, which would probably lead you to guess my motive. I have, then, been principally, in this tedious preamble, playing the part of the school-boy, loitering or taking the longest way to school,

where

where he is sure of meeting with a correction he is right conscious of having deserved. This is but too truly my case. Prepare yourself, then, to lecture me well, for once more I tell you before hand, I am in the wrong, and stand self-condemned.

To the point, then. You know my situation with Lady Harriet, whom I have often thought it pleasant that you should chide me for not loving enough, when I really was as much in love with her as it was in my power to be; and certainly I loved no one else. You are sensible I am not one of great professions, and perhaps not the more for that deficient in sentiments. I had always done Lady

Harriet

Harriet the juſtice of conſidering her as perfectly capable of making a reaſonable man very happy. Both her perſon and temper appeared very pleaſing to me; her own merit, then, which did not even ſtand in need of my mother's recommendation, I, in the ſimplicity of my heart, thought ſufficient to ſecure my heart to her. Perhaps I too little diſtruſted myſelf, or I ſhould not have now to give you rather a diſagreeable account of myſelf.

I had choſen, after my mother's deceaſe, my aunt Clifford's at Peterſham, there to remain in receſs for ſome time, till I ſhould have finiſhed the examination of ſome papers, with the conſequential

sequential notes upon them, by my father's special direction. While I staid there, you may be sure I would not omit to see Mrs. Pierpoint, which is but a gentle walk from my aunt's. Finding her full of her encomiums of Clara, a companion of Lady Harriet, who had often mentioned her to me, and always with great warmth of praise, but whom I had never seen, she readily entered into a very innocent scheme of mine for satisfying, with my own eyes, my curiosity. I found, too, that some preparation was the more necessary, for that she hardly ever appeared in any of the royal gardens about Richmond, or in any public place where I might have the chance to see her; I was told, at the

fame

same time, that this reserve did not, as might be collected from the rest of her behaviour's being perfectly clear of any artifice, proceed from the consciousness of how much value rareness adds to beauty, but purely from an aversion for the glare of life, and from a peculiar taste of her's for domestic retirement, by the imitating of which negative prudence many of her sex might be gainers, and the public no great loser. They do not enough consider, that they are like some kinds of merchandize which do not go off the worse, for the being rather kept in a warehouse, than exposed at a shop window. To say the truth, none lose more than the women by our present way of treating them. Instead of encouraging

them

them to look upon themselves, as they really are, born to be the blessings of domestic life; we make of them a vain, insipid, foolish decoration, and consider them purely as butterflies fluttering about to amuse the eye for the moment, without touching the heart. Nor can I imagine, that there can be any great joy in the confusion which reigns in mixed companies, where the figures, who are commonly silly enough caricatures, neither leave, nor deserve to leave any more impression on the head or heart, than those from a magic lanthorn on a wall, which succeed and efface one another with equal rapidity. It is then in favor to the fair that I would have that just medium observed, which preserves to them their dignity, without abridging

them

them of their due ſhare of the current entertainments. I would not wiſh them recluſes, nor not to go occaſionally to public places, but I would not have them live in them. Paſs me this digreſſion; as it is to the honor of Clara I could not ſuppreſs it.

Well, then, to Mrs. Pierpoint's ſhe came, and I ſtole into the room juſt as ſhe was executing, with the accompanyment of the harpſichord, an Italian ſong much in vogue, with a divine voice, a moſt maſterly ſkill, and with more graces than ever La Gabrieli threw into her execution. This is no fulſom exaggeration; it is literal truth. But, oh! my friend, when ſhe got up to receive my compliment of introduction! What a celeſ-

a celestial figure! What an irresistible power of beauty; enough to strike wit stupid, or to irradiate stupidity with wit! Such a shape! Such an air! Such a complexion! Let who will for me admire the Ivory of the Greeks, the Ebony of the Africans, the Copper of the Americans, the Jonquil of the Indians, the Orange of the tawny Moors, but give me the Roses of Britain! With what a delicacy did they not bloom on her cheeks, to lose themselves by degrees in the ambient White! While all together she displayed one of those rare forms, that Nature seems to create in complaisance to Love, for the greater glory of his prerogative, in the confusion of our reason.

But

But when we entered into conversation, she soon discovered to me that her outward charms were the least of her merit. So modest! So proper! So correct, without stiffness! Then a voice which was melody itself, in such harmony with every thing she said, while every thing she said breathed the spirit of truth, and the energy of sentiment, that nothing could more strongly prove the power of reconciling sense to sound, and of giving to reason itself the charms of musical expression. But what sovereignly enchanted me, was the total unconsciousness that appeared in her, of her excessive beauty, without the least taint of affectation, that horrid and detestable,

deteſtable ſin againſt the graces of nature. Her underſtanding ſeemed to have all the nerve of manlineſs, under all the ſoftneſs of the moſt exquiſite female delicacy. Upon my honor, the more I reflect on ſuch an aſſemblage of perfections, the leſs I find myſelf guilty for not having withſtood their power.

I was not, however, coxcomb enough to be the bubble of that ingenuous frankneſs, that gracious eaſe which ſhe threw into her reception of me. I was far from conſtruing it extraordinarily in my favor; for I plainly diſcerned that I owed it to the footing on which I ſtood with Lady Harriet, and which, I confeſs it with ſhame, I could,

could, for an obvious reaſon, have been content with its not being quite ſo advantageous an one. Yet, to that conſideration it was that I was obliged for leave to pay her my reſpects, where ſhe was living, at one Mrs. Buckley's, the widow of an Attorney, but a woman of a moſt cultivated underſtanding, and a moſt excellent character. I think, too, ſhe muſt have been, in her time, remarkably handſome, which may be diſcerned through all her preſent total neglect of any thing that might ſet off her perſon. Her air is ſtill extremely noble, and ſhe carries with her all the deportment of one who has ſeen the higheſt company, in the way it is the beſt to ſee it, with a juſt ſuperiority to it. She brought

but

but a ſmall fortune to her huſband, who had a very competent one, independent of his practice, which was very extenſive, and very honorable to him for the probity with which he exerciſed it. He had had, it ſeems, the good ſenſe to diſcover thoſe treaſures of it, which Mrs. Buckley poſſeſſed, and which his own great learning enabled him to improve to a very uncommon pitch; in return for which ſhe made him the happieſt of men in her domeſtic conduct. At his deceaſe he left her in very eaſy circumſtances. All this I particulariſe to you, not only as I know you delight in ſuch characters, but as nothing is indifferent that has any relation to Clara, to whom ſhe is a kind of aunt,

by marriage: In ſhort, ſhe is a very worthy reſpectable woman.

Of my permiſſion then to viſit them, I did not fail of availing myſelf; but took great care not to give it any air of miſtery or deſign, ſo as to alarm the delicacy of Clara, or any ſuſpicion of Lady Harriet, who, on the contrary, was extremely pleaſed at the notice I took of her friend. In another, this ſecurity might have appeared a preſumption, but I muſt do her the juſtice to ſay, though the truth tends to condemn myſelf, that it was owing either to her confidence in me, or in Clara, and, indeed, I rather fancy in both.

The opportunity, however, of ſeeing Clara, in which I indulged myſelf

as aſſiduouſly as I durſt, conſiſtently with the neceſſity I ſaw there was of keeping fair with all parties, could not fail of producing the natural effect of enſlaving me more and more. Every time I ſaw her I diſcovered new beauties in her, and had the leſs power left to liſten to the proteſtations of my reaſon, and even of my honor, againſt a new paſſion, in the circumſtances I was in with Lady Harriet, whom I could not ſtill ſay that I did not love, though not in the violent degree with which I burnt for Clara.

Whenever I was going to viſit this ſovereign of my ſoul, it was always with the pain of a heart diſtracted between a deſire of ſucceeding with her,

and the inward reproaches of wounded honor; but at the ſight of her every ſcruple vaniſhed, to leave to love the entire maſtery of the field.

As to Clara, I am very ſure, that in the innocence of her heart, and the ſimplicity of her intentions, ſhe never once had any the leaſt glimmering perception of all that paſſion with which ſhe was inſpiring me, and of which I was, at the firſt, myſelf the leſs diffident, from its being perfectly pure and clear of any libertine impreſſion. My love was maſked to me by that friendſhip which is perhaps one of the greateſt proofs of love, being, in truth, inſeparable from that paſſion where that paſſion exiſts as a ſentiment,

sentiment. I am, indeed, but too sensible, and am perhaps myself an instance, that the casuistry of love is rather a relaxed one, but not to such a pitch as to allow of enmity to the object of it, and surely there cannot be a greater hostility than projecting its dishonor or ruin. My infidelity to Lady Harriet was a great fault, though an involuntary one, as I was yielding to a resistless power; but I could not the more for that harbour a thought of injury to Clara, the innocent cause of my guilt.

Mrs. Buckley discovered as soon, or sooner, probably, than myself, the weakness into which I was falling, and the drift of my assiduities, and

I muſt do her the juſtice to atteſt, that ſhe threw into my way every diſcouragement that ſhe could, without coming to an explanation with me, that muſt have ended in an open rupture, and without acquainting Clara of her ſuſpicions. This, I ſuppoſe, ſhe avoided, either that ſhe might not diſquiet her, or becauſe ſhe judged it beſt to let the diſcovery come from her ownſelf. I could have heartily wiſhed to have had her on my ſide; I ſounded the ford, but found it impracticable. In ſhort, as far as I durſt open myſelf, at a diſtance, and in oblique hints, I found her unapproachable, for which, in my heart, I deteſted and honored her, and deſpiſed myſelf.

My

My case every day growing more and more desperate, by the increase of my passion to an intolerable height, and by the urgency of the term that could not be far off, for my making good my engagements to Lady Harriet, I was driven to a state of distraction. Often had I been tempted to give myself the relief of acquainting Clara of the condition of my heart: but never could muster up courage enough to hazard the step. There was always, when I approached her with that intention, something in her looks that checked me, unknown perhaps to herself.

I knew she had at her option a number of advantageous offers, which

ſhe ſhewed no inclination to accept; I knew ſhe had refuſed Lord Lovell, in a manner the moſt ſpirited and the moſt noble. *All this*, while it raiſed my paſſion, ſunk my hopes, eſpecially as my caſe, with regard to her, was far from favorable. I had a double taſk to fulfil, a perfidy to extenuate, and a paſſion to declare. With many of the ſex, indeed, the firſt would be rather a recommendation of the laſt, though I cannot ſay I much admire the wiſdom of admitting an infidelity to one woman, to be a very great temptation for another woman's faith. But ſo it too often is. Then as to the other's being a friend, that conſideration would but render the triumph the greater in the ſacrifice. But

I knew

I knew Clara too well, and had too much love not to trëmble for a very different reception.

To ſpeak, then, I fairly confeſs it, I was afraid, eſpecially having a plea to urge of the badneſs of which I was myſelf inwardly but too much convinced, my heart treating me ſo tirannically, that while it was compelling me to obey its orders, it diſdained to conceal from me the injuſtice of them. Shameful and deteſted weakneſs! We readily allow that we feel the force of the paſſions, but do not lay ſtreſs enough on our equally feeling our duty to reſiſt them. On this occaſion I was mortified to the higheſt degree, to find that all the authority of my

reaſon ſubmitted to their lawleſs ſway, and could neither bear the figure I actually made to myſelf, nor that which I ſo juſtly apprehended I ſhould make to Clara, on the declaration to her of my ſentiments. The worſt of it, too, was, that I had too much cauſe to think I ſhould have all the guilt to myſelf, in vain, without the conſolation of making an accomplice.

In the neceſſity, however, I was under of running the riſk, which I had not the power of ſo much as endeavouring to decline, I choſe of the only two ways there were for me to run it, that which was the leaſt embarraſſing to me. I wrote to Clara, then, a letter,

and

and received her answer, the copies of both which I inclose you, for your consideration, only entreating of you, in the midst of judgement, not to forget mercy. Remember that I have begun as I now end, with condemning myself.

Yours, &c.

SOBERTON.

LETTER XXVI.

The Marquefs of SOBERTON *to Miſs* CLARA MAYNWARING.

Miſs, *Peterſham.*

DETERMINED by a reſiſtleſs impulſion to write to you upon a point, on which, I confeſs, I dare not perſonally ſpeak to you; how ſhall I go on, who have already ſo inauſpiciouſly begun? Or what can I ſay to you, with any hopes of a favorable acceptance, while the very ſuit I have to urge to you is itſelf my crime?

Yet

Yet one would imagine, that a ſitu-ation to the reproach of human kind, ſo common as mine, might, at leaſt, furniſh the form and matter of an apology in extenuation; but you, O incomparable Clara! ſtand in ſuch a degree of ſuperhuman eminence, that, with reſpect to you, there is no drawing into precedent the paſt procedure of any of our ſex towards any of yours.

Every thing conſpires to diſcourage me. While thoſe perfections of your's, which form, at bottom, the ſtrongeſt plea in favor of my delinquency, are in the awe with which they ſtrike me ſo great a check to my hopes of your forgiving,

forgiving it, what reaſon have I not to defpair of your rewarding it, of your crowning it with the higheſt happineſs, to which the greateſt innocence, joined with the greateſt worthineſs, could hardly dare to aſpire?

I ſhall not, however, make any merit to you of not uſing any falſe coloring or artifice, as I am very clear, that your great good-ſenſe would immediately ſee through it, and ſpurn the indignity offered to it, from which you are, beſides, abundantly defended, by the ſincerity of my ſentiments towards you.

With intentions leſs pure, leſs candid than mine, another would, at leaſt,

evade

evade the mention of the degree of engagement in which I ſtand with Lady Harriet, if but to avoid the untowardneſs of the reminding you of ſo unfavorable a ſituation, and making, as it were, a neceſſity of honor to you, to ſeize ſo obvious a plea for your denial.

But, angelic Clara, I am ſo far from wiſhing you to forget it, that it is preciſely on your juſt, your fair conſideration of that very circumſtance, a conſideration, eſpecially, in the light of friendſhip to Lady Harriet, that I ground what very little hope I have of your ſuffering me to ſue for pity, if in vain it is I muſt ſue for love.

Is it not even conformable to your own principles, which are ſo admirably juſt, to condemn one, who ſhould conſent to the nuptial union with nothing more than indifference for the other party? Yet, how much greater muſt be the guilt of perpetrating a marriage, with a violent paſſion in the heart for another? In ſuch a poſition may it not be truly ſaid, that Love and Honor both agree to forbid the banns, before it is yet too late? If in ſuch a dilemma a point of honor ſtands oppoſed to a point of honor, is it not fit that the greateſt of the two ſhould carry it? And, ſurely, the greater one is, in this caſe, not to conſummate ſo unauſpicious a ſacrifice as that muſt be,

be, to which the heart is wanting. In what is it that the worthy, the eſtimable, the truly amiable Lady Harriet can have deſerved ſo ill of me, that I ſhould wiſh to give her my hand while my heart is another's? Yes, another's, without any fault of mine. Deign to aſk yourſelf this queſtion. Is not my preſent ſituation one of thoſe forced ones, to which pity is ſo much more due than blame? Is it not the neceſſary effect of that invincibly ſuperior power of your's, which is at once the cauſe and the juſtification?

What friendſhip, then, would it not be to Lady Harriet, to deliver her from one, who is himſelf too unfortunate to make her happy?

But

But what a ſuperhuman effort of generoſity would it be, an effort worthy, in ſhort, of the divine Clara, not only to forgive an involuntary fault, if loving her could be called a fault, but in conſideration of herſelf being the cauſe, innocently ſo, no doubt, but ſtill the cauſe, to think ſome compaſſion due to me, if not ſome amends, in that ſpirit of equity, which dictates the reparation of any hurt to another, though but an unintentional one?

Nor would I have you think, incomparable Clara, that I would wiſh, even were it in my power, to draw you into any procedure that would, or at leaſt ought to leſſen you in your own opinion,

opinion. No. It is by my paſſion's being founded on eſteem, that I know it to be a virtue; and conſequently ſuperior either to the meanneſs of a clandeſtine obliquity, or to the greater meanneſs yet of a falſe bravade.

I propoſe, then, I will not ſay on your leave for it, but on your not expreſsly forbidding it, to repair directly to Lady Harriet, to throw myſelf at her feet, and, by an ingenuous confeſſion of the ſtate of my heart, merit, at leaſt, her pity, if not her forgiveneſs. I will go farther. I will make her, next to yourſelf, the arbitreſs of my fate. I would even tender to her that inſtant my hand, but for a reaſon, which certainly would not

be

be that of fearing ſhe would take me at my word, in which event I ſhould unqueſtionably realiſe my offer, but becauſe ſuch an offer would have too much the air of an indignity, as if I could imagine ſhe would not ſcorn to accept me in ſuch a ſituation. To ſay but the truth, I have ſo high an opinion of her, that while I do not deſpair even of her ſhowing clemency to my guilt towards her, I am ſure of her doing jnſtice to your perfect innocence.

Unfortunately, the greateſt of my fears is, not that of her reception of a declaration compelled from me by the neceſſity of it, and even ſanctified by the inviolable regard I have for herſelf,

ſelf, and for thoſe laws of honor that ſo ſtrongly remonſtrate againſt puſhing to a concluſion an engagement, which is prophaned where Love refuſes his plenary aſſent; I am more in pain yet, and not without reaſon, leſt this procedure of mine ſhould give you an ill opinion of my character, or an unfavorable impreſſion of my power of conſtancy. To an objection ſo obvious on this occaſion, and, I add, even againſt myſelf, ſo naturally to be inferred from my own plea, what ſatisfactory anſwer have I to make? Not any, I repeat it; not any, except one, which is not a whit the leſs ſacredly true for its being ſo trite, ſo commonplace an one, and to which, moreover, your ſupreme modeſty will hinder you from

from giving the weight that it deferves. It is this: that you are, by your matchleſs perfections, placed above all fear, all danger of any preſent or future compariſon to your diſadvantage, with any human beauty that the univerſe can be imagined to produce. O Clara! deign but to do yourſelf juſtice. Where is that requiſite that you do not ſovereignly poſſeſs, for gaining the heart and fixing it for ever?

In this true unflattered light it is, that I contemplate you, with the full approbation of even my reaſon, which aſſures me I can do nothing more agreeable to it, than to offer you, with all the diffidence of confcious inferiority to your merit, every thing in my power,

to

to lay at your feet, and to intreat your acceptance, on your own terms, while in every event I remain, with perfect devotion, reſpect, and eſteem,

MISS,

Your moſt devoted, and

moſt faithful humble ſervant,

SOBERTON.

LET-

LETTER XXVII.

Miſs CLARA MAYNWARING *to the Marqueſs of* SOBERTON.

My Lord-Marqueſs, *Richmond.*

THERE is in your letter an alarming paſſage, which has thrown me into ſo exquiſite a diſtreſs, that I hope I ſhall ſtand excuſed to decency for this injury to it, in anſwering one of your ſex, eſpecially on the ſubject on which you have been pleaſed to write me: It is, my Lord, where you cruelly threaten me to go to Lady Harriet, and to take me for

your

your text of inſult to the woman in the world who the leaſt deſerves it, and particularly from your Lordſhip.

You reſerve to me, it is true, the liberty to forbid that horrid ſtep. But the word "forbid" belongs to a ſtile of authority, which I have no pretentions to uſe to your Lordſhip. As a very high favor, indeed, I may and ſhall take it, if you will, on this occaſion, deign to allow me a repreſentation, which will, at the ſame time, include an anſwer to the reſt of your letter.

But firſt give me leave to return your Lordſhip my moſt humble thanks for the compliments of which you have

condeſcended to be ſo laviſh on me, and of which not one flatters me ſo greatly as the profeſſion of your eſteem: I value it ſo highly, that I ſhould be extremely loth to forfeit it; and if the ſincereſt retribution of that ſentiment may acquit me to your Lordſhip of my acknowledgments, I can, with great truth, aſſure you, that I have ever done juſtice to your merit, and never wiſhed you worſe than that you ſhould keep up to your great character, nor ever derogate from yourſelf.

I do not here, my Lord, mean to enter with you into any diſcuſſion of the plea you draw from the power of that lawleſs paſſion, of which my knowing nothing, and my wiſh to know nothing,

thing, which is not, I assure you, lessened by this circumstance, dispenses me from saying any more.

I have but one succinct peremptory answer to offer. Perfectly sensible as I am of all it must have cost one of your Lordship's strict honor to make me so undue a sacrifice, I cannot better prove my gratitude to you, than by my not accepting it. This is my unalterable resolution. Nor will you, I presume, take offence at this, since that cannot be called a refusal, which is only so of what it is not in my power to grant, nor, indeed, very clearly in yours to offer.

As your Lordship, then, may rest fully assured of the impossibility of my

changing my mind, I leave it to your-
ſelf to judge, whether you can, to
any valuable purpoſe, make uſe of my
name to ſtrike a dagger to Lady Har-
riet's heart, and through her's to mine,
in ſuch a confeſſion as you have threat-
ened me with making to her.

Hitherto this tranſitory eclipſe of your reaſon has had no other conſequences than giving me the greateſt uneaſineſs, which I ſincerely forgive: Nay, ſhall ever remember the motive, not only with gratitude, but to your great honor, on its becoming to you an occaſion for exerting the ſuperiority of your virtue, and proving your power even over yourſelf.

As

As this ſtep of your's is a profound ſecret to Lady Harriet, and may ever remain ſo, you have no reparation to make to her, but that of returning to her with a regard only the greater for its momentary interruption: A procedure this ſo much its own reward in the happineſs it will bring with it, in the innocence it will reſtore to you, and in the honor it will do you, as can hardly tempt in vain a heart ſo noble as that of Lord Soberton. In what could you find the equivalent of the only meaſure left for your recovering your own eſteem? Mine is not worth mentioning.

With this I incloſe and return your letter, in no intention of ſlight or diſreſpect,

you may be sure, but purely not to keep any monument that might have the air of a trophy on this untoward incident, which, however, it is now so much in your power to turn into the greatest of all human triumphs, the triumph over yourself.

I am, with every sentiment of esteem and respect,

My LORD-MARQUESS,

Your LORDSHIP's most obedient,

and most humble servant,

CLARA MAYNWARING.

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